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# THE CHURCH HISTORIANS OF ENGLAND.

VOL. I.—PART II.

CONTAINING

## THE HISTORICAL WORKS OF THE VENERABLE BEDA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL LATIN,

WITH A PREFACE AND NOTES,

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# THE HISTORICAL WORKS OF THE VENERABLE BEDA.

# PREFACE TO BEDA.

§ 1. It is a cause for deep regret that no contemporary life of the Venerable Beda[1] has reached our times. Whilst we have detailed and authentic information respecting his less important contemporaries, St. Guthlac and St. Cuthbert, St. Columbanus and St. Wilfrid, St. Wilbrord and St. Willibald, we are left without any such guide when investigating the life of the earliest English historian. What he did so willingly and so well for others, others did not do for him. No biography of him anterior to the eleventh or twelfth century is known to exist; and that, as might have been expected, is too vague to be of any critical value.

§ 2. Yet, assuredly, this deficiency in our early literature did not arise from any ignorance on the part of his contemporaries respecting the merits of Beda, or from any unwillingness to acknowledge them with due respect and reverence. Shortly after his death his sanctity was universally admitted, having been established by the miracles said to have been wrought by his relics. His works were circulated far and wide among the principal churches of the continent, and were eagerly sought after and studied by the most learned men throughout Europe. Nor was this reputation of a transitory character, for it extended with each succeeding generation; and the history of our early church exhibits few individuals whose character stands higher, either for moral worth or literary acquirements, than does that of the Venerable Beda.

§ 3. We must therefore look elsewhere for the reasons of this apparent neglect; nor will it be difficult to find them. They arise from the character of the historian's life, which passed without the occurrence of any of those incidents which afford the chief scope for the exercise of the biographer's occupation. Had a life of Beda been written by a contemporary, it would almost necessarily have been scanty, even to meagreness; and though we might have possessed definite information upon many points which are at present obscure, or even unknown to us, yet in all probability we should not have been gainers to the extent which at first might be anticipated. These remarks, let it be remembered, apply only to the external incidents of his life. Had he possessed a biographer enabled, by circumstances and kindred feeling, to record his conversation and the tone and character of his mind, to furnish us with the picture

[1] The editor has not hesitated to discard the erroneous form of Bede, and to restore to our historian his true name of Beda. Not only is this the correct and grammatical termination, but by this designation he was known to our earlier English writers, such as Jewell, (Works, iv. 778, 779,) Fulke, (Rhemish Testament, 1 Epist. John iii. annot. 4. Apoc. ix. 1,) Featley, (Clavis Mystica, p. 393,) and many others.

of his every-day occupations, as he was at study in the cell, or at prayer in the church, and to admit us to communion with his spirit as his days passed in the retirement of the monastery, this indeed would have been a treasure. Yet we scarcely have a right to expect such a document. Beda was, in his own time, no prominent character. The placid devotion of his existence in this world was similar to that of thousands of others whose good works and labours of love are unrecorded, and whose very names are forgotten. His learning, extensive as it was, drew no very marked distinction between himself and his fellows, for he lived in a learned age, and among those by whom learning could be appreciated; he left behind him a wide circle of learned scholars; and, generally speaking, the mere possession of literature affords no sufficient scope, in itself, for the biographer. His peculiar recommendation as the historian of the English church, in which character he is best known to later generations, arises partly indeed from the merits of the work itself; yet not entirely. That reputation is, in some measure, the growth of the centuries which have passed between his era and our own. His contemporaries could not, in their day, anticipate the combination of circumstances which stamp upon every page of that precious document the peculiar value with which time has invested it. It is without a rival in the literature of our country. However much, therefore, we may lament the absence of an early biography of Beda, we ought not to be surprised at this omission. There was not much to record beyond his birth and his death, his prayers and his labours. He did not, like St. Guthlac, retire into the wilderness, and wage war with the evil spirits by which it was haunted. He did not, like St. Cuthbert, lay aside the bishop's robe for the hermit's cowl, and exchange the splendour of a court for the solitude of a rocky island. He did not, like St. Columbanus, carry the reputation of his native church into foreign countries, and establish monasteries which should vie with each other in recording the history of their founder. He did not, like St. Wilfrid of York, plead his cause before kings and synods, and strive, through all opposition, to raise the ecclesiastical power above the secular authority. He did not, like St. Wilbrord and St. Willibald, preach Christianity among the heathen, and leave home and kindred for the extension of the everlasting gospel. Had he done any of these things he would, most probably, have found a biographer; but his life presented no such salient points, and it was unrecorded.

§ 4. Yet we must not suppose that no authentic materials remain whereupon a life of Beda may be founded.[1] He himself has

[1] The earliest of these appears to be the "Vita Venerabilis Bedæ, Presbyteri, et Giruensis Monachi," a translation of which is appended to this Preface, see p. xxxix. A second life, apparently of the thirteenth century, is contained in the Barlow MS. 39, fol. 143 (see § 82). It is framed on Beda's information respecting himself, gleaned, with some care, from his various writings, and it consequently supplies us with no new facts, as the writer candidly admits, for he thus humbly expresses himself:—"Nos autem novam materiam non invenimus; sed more fabri, vetera et usu ita ac particulatim comminuta in ignem reponentes, follium ac incudis seu malleoli adjutorio in unum readunamus." He states that Beda died upon the 7th of the kalends of June, A.D. 734, being Ascension-day. The

furnished us with an outline of his personal history; a few other details may be gleaned from his writings; and the affectionate regard of one of his scholars has preserved a minute and most touching account of his last moments. Upon these the subsequent sketch is framed, in the course of which the editor will avail himself of such incidental illustrations as may be gathered from other credible authorities.

§ 5. Of the descent or family of Beda nothing is known. He gives us no information respecting the names, circumstances, or rank of his parents; and other writers leave us in the same ignorance upon these particulars. But hence to conclude that he was of lowly origin[1] would be no fair inference; for such was his humility that he would, doubtless, have lightly esteemed the advantages of birth, had he possessed them. He was born, according to the most probable calculation, in the year 674, although other writers prefer A.D. 672 or 673.[2] In a previous work the editor stated his belief that the arguments preponderated in favour of the year 674; more recent authors, however, have conceived that this date is certainly one, possibly two years too late. Yet upon a renewed examination of the question, it appears to have lost none of its former verisimilitude, and he has seen no reason to abandon it for any other

editor considers it unnecessary to print this narrative. It commences with the words, "Operæ prætium est cognoscere et celebri memoria tenendum posteritati mandare."

Simeon of Durham, notwithstanding his local advantages, contents himself with inserting in the first book of his Ecclesiastical History of that see, almost in Beda's own words, an account of the erection of the monastery at Jarrow, an extract from the introduction to the Ecclesiastical History, a list of his writings, and lastly, the letter from Cuthbert to Cuthwin. He mentions, incidentally, the translation of Beda's remains at Durham, (of which we know from other authority that he was an eye-witness,) and that the "porch" of the church of Jarrow had been dedicated to him. From this writer we also learn that there existed, in his day, a "mansiuncula" of stone, in which report said that our historian had been used to study and meditate. For these particulars the reader is referred to Simeon's own history, which forms part of the present series.

Mabillon (Act. SS. Ordinis S. Bened. sec. iii. p. i. p. 501) has given, from a manuscript which formerly belonged to De Thou, a short life of Beda, which professes to have been written by one Anthony, his disciple. It agrees very closely in facts, arrangement, and diction with the production of Simeon; and as it also contains an allusion to Beda's removal at Durham, it must have been written or interpolated after the occurrence of that event; see this Preface, (§ 42.)

The compilers of the Acta Sanctorum have inserted in that work (Maii, vi. 718) a life of Beda, which is only, as they remark, a series of extracts from Simeon of Durham and Beda himself, appended to which is Cuthbert's letter to Cuthwin. They refer to another account, which they did not think it advisable to print, in consequence of the fables with which it was interspersed. The same character may be assigned to the legend inserted in the compilation of John Capgrave, (Nova Legenda Angliæ, fol. xxxiiii. b. ed. Lond. 1516.)

Beyond these materials we have no other information respecting the life of Beda, excepting a few particulars, which will be noticed in the present memoir.

[1] Whence the Magdeburg Centuriators obtained their authority for the statement which they make upon this point does not appear.

[2] The editor is aware that by far the greater number of authorities ascribe his birth to either 672 or 673. The author of the Life in the Biographia Britannica, and Mr. Wright (p. 264), hesitate between these two years. The earlier date is supported by Smith in his edition of the Hist. Eccl. (p. 222), by Cave (Hist. Eccl. i. 612), by Du Pin, cent. viii. p. 89 (fol. Lond. 1693), and by Natalis Alexand. vi. 30 (fol. Venet. 1778). The year 673 is preferred by Fleury, xlii. § 13, and by Archbishop Ussher, Antiq. Brit. pp. 491, 538.

which has been proposed. It becomes necessary, therefore, that we examine in detail the arguments upon which each theory is founded.

§ 6. Beda tells us (§ 451) that he finished his History in the year 731; and in an appendix to that work (§ 454) he states that, from the time when he received the presbyterate until his fifty-ninth year, he had devoted himself to reading and writing, and that he was the author of certain books, one of which was the Historia Ecclesiastica. It has been customary thence to assume that he was in his fifty-ninth year in A.D. 731; and this being admitted, we are carried back to 672, or perhaps to 673, for the date of his birth. The position of the editor however is, that thus to synchronize A.D. 731 with Beda's fifty-ninth year is a hasty assumption, which will not bear the test of a closer scrutiny.

§ 7. Let us bear in mind the circumstances under which the History was written. Having finished it towards the middle of the year 731, Beda transmitted a copy to Ceolfrith, king of Northumbria, with the request that he would read it carefully, and permit it to be inscribed to himself. Both these requests were granted, and the volume was returned to its author, who, after he had made a few additions, sent it once more to the king, in the form in which we now have it. It is important for us to bear in mind the inference, that some time must necessarily have been occupied in this process, and the fact that a revision of the whole, embodying certain alterations and additions, was actually made between its first and its second presentation to Ceolfrith. That one of these additions was the prologue to the History, in the form of a letter addressed to that sovereign, is self-evident; another is an allusion to the victory gained in October 732 (§ 448) by Charles Martel over the Saracens, the information respecting which could scarcely have reached Northumbria before the end of that year; and a third, the editor apprehends is the Appendix, which contains the notice of Beda's age, already mentioned. These appear to him to have been all written in 732 at the earliest. One certainly was; and he is at a loss to conceive how, under the circumstances of the case, the others could have been written sooner. The list of Beda's writings, moreover, which is embodied in that Appendix, includes the Historia Ecclesiastica, and it must therefore have been drawn up after that work had received Ceolfrith's final approbation; for until that period Beda could not have regarded it as a completed work, or as entirely out of his hands. There seems, then, a strong body of evidence leading us to the inference that this Appendix was written, not in 731, but in 732 at the soonest, and that this date coincides with Beda's fifty-ninth year; and so we are carried back to A.D. 674, for his birth. And this brings into harmony, as we shall presently see, the chronology of Florence of Worcester, one of our earliest and most valuable historians, which otherwise must be rejected, for it is incompatible with any other date than that for which we have been contending.

§ 8. When Benedict Biscop returned from his journey to Rome in 672, he obtained from Ecgfrith, king of Northumbria, the gift of

a large tract of ground lying on the north side of the river Wear, upon which he forthwith proceeded to erect a monastery. "The territory of this monastery," as Beda himself expresses it, was his birth-place.[1] This passage is so rendered by king Alfred in his Anglo-Saxon version, as to have led to the supposition that the present town of Sunderland was the exact locality which Beda had expressed so vaguely. This supposition is a natural one; and the temptation to hazard it is certainly very great. The present town of Sunderland stands within a short distance of the spot on which the ancient monastery of Wearmouth was erected, and the similarity of the name to that mentioned by Alfred, might at first sight appear conclusive evidence of identity. Yet the theory is attended with difficulties too weighty to be rejected. The present Sunderland stands on the south side of the river Wear; whereas the spot on which Beda was born was on the northern bank, as was the whole district granted by king Ecgfrith. King Alfred, moreover, as is obvious from the sentence in which it occurs, uses the word "Sundorland," not as a proper name, but as a close rendering of Beda's Latin "territorium;" and other instances occur[2] in which these terms are explained the one by the other. We cannot, therefore, advance beyond the information which Beda himself has given us; and we must be satisfied with knowing that he was born somewhere to the north of the river Wear, and probably at no great distance from the present port of Wearmouth.

§ 9. About the year 681[3] the greater part of England was ravaged by one of those devastating pestilences by which it was so frequently visited. It is by no means improbable that the parents of Beda fell victims to this scourge; but be this as it may, it would appear that at this time he was already an orphan. It is recorded by himself that in his seventh year, which (adopting our chronology as to the period of his birth) corresponds with A.D. 681, he was handed over by his relatives to the care of Benedict Biscop, that he might be educated in the newly-erected monastery of St. Peter at Wearmouth. From the earliest period of the history of the Benedictine order, its monasteries had been more especially dedicated to the advancement of learning. It could scarce be otherwise; for St. Benedict hesitated not to take upon himself the education of such children as were offered through him to God's service, and gladly received them within his monastery, thus necessarily entailing upon himself the responsibility of their education. No sooner was he settled at Subiaco, than Placidus and Maurus were confided to his instruction; and the precedent thus established

[1] ... "natus in territorio ejusdem monasterii"...(§ 454.) which is thus rendered by king Alfred:... "wæs ic acenned on sundorlande þæs ylcan myustres." This term "sundorland," as its etymology shows, means land set apart, or sundered from the rest for some particular purpose, as this district was for the use of the newly-founded monastery.

[2] Lye quotes two passages from an ancient glossary in the Cottonian MS. Julius A. ii. fol. 5 and 152, in which Sundorland is rendered by "separalis terra, prædium, fundus, territorium." No other instance of the use of this word occurs in Alfred's version of Beda besides that already quoted.

[3] "Eodem fere tempore ... multas Britanniæ provincias mortalitas sæva corripiebat." Hist. Eccl. § 292; Annales Cambriæ, ap. Petrie and Hardy, p. 883.

having been sanctioned by the provisions of his rule, was perpetuated without interruption.[1]

§ 10. The circumstances which attended Beda's renunciation of the world and the solemn dedication of himself to the more immediate service of God, must have produced a deep impression on the boy's mind, softened as it probably was by the sorrow occasioned by the death of his parents. The rule of St. Benedict had made ample provision for such occurrences, and they were by no means unfrequent. The parents or guardians of the child, as the case might be, led him up to the altar; they solemnly swore before witnesses that he should be deprived of whatever worldly goods might otherwise become his; or if they were unwilling to do this, an offering might be made on his behalf to the monastery; the child's hands were then folded in the covering of the altar, and the rites by which he was irrevocably bound to the service of that altar were completed.[2]

§ 11. Such was the ceremony in the case of those who were offered, as Beda was, by relatives; it was different, however, with those who had arrived at years of maturity, and were competent to form a decision for themselves. With them there was more delay, difficulties were accumulated, and all was done to test the patience and the sincerity of the candidate for admission.[3] He was required to apply at the gates of the monastery during five successive days; nor was he then permitted to enter beyond that portion of the building appropriated to the use of the laity. Here he was interrogated by the officer whose duty it was to investigate the character of the applicant, by whom the petition was conveyed to the abbot. The rule of St. Benedict was then read and explained to him, and he was told that to this law he must henceforth be subject. If he persevered in his intention, he was brought, clothed as he was in his secular habit, before the assembled chapter, and the abbot inquired of him the nature of his request. He answered, "I wish to lay aside the world, and to serve God." The abbot replied, "Hear, brother; it may perchance happen that you are unable to observe our rule; for, having pledged yourself to it, you may not return to the world. The Canons of the Council of Nice say, 'If any one return to the world after having laid aside his arms, he shall be a penitent for ten years.' Therefore, although our rule

[1] Mabill. Annal. Bened. ii. § 3; Act. SS. Bened. Præf. sec. iii. § 39.

[2] See Reg. S. Benedicti, cap. lxvi. "De filiis nobilium et pauperum qui offeruntur." Care was taken to strip the child of all his temporal property, that he might thus be freed from one temptation to which he would otherwise be exposed, and have less inducement to return to the world which he had abjured. That this dedication bound the child irrevocably to the monastery, will appear by the following extract from the Rule of St. Isidore (ap. Menard. Concordia Regularum, p. 991, edit. Par. 1638):—"Quicunque a parentibus propriis in monasterio fuerit delegatus, noverit se ibi perpetuo permansurum." The same is confirmed by the 49th canon of the Fourth Council of Toledo (A.D. 671, ap. Bruns, Canones Concil. i. 235):—"Monachum aut paterna devotio aut propria professio facit; quidquid horum fuerit, alligatum tenebit; proinde eis ad mundum reverti intercludimus aditum, et omnem ad seculum interdicimus regressum." Here return to the world is alike forbidden to both.

[3] It was provided by the Rule of St. Benedict (cap. lxv.) "Ut prædicentur ei omnia dura et aspera, per quæ itur ad Deum."

does not enjoin it, yet it is better that you should have space for deliberation." The candidate was then dismissed; but if he continued steadfast in his resolution, he was once more summoned before the abbot and convent, and having solemnly professed that he would not, on any account, return to the world, he laid aside his secular dress, his hair was shorn, he was clothed in the garb appropriate to his new situation, and was consigned to the care of the master of the novices.

§ 12. The regulations of the monastery required that the novice should remain for ten months under the instructions of this individual. During this period he was subjected to the strictest discipline. He was not permitted to speak with any secular person, nor to leave the walls of the convent, except when forming one of a procession, nor to taste animal food, even though he might be sinking under bodily weakness. In short, all was calculated to test the sincerity of his attachment to the monastic institution, before that step was taken which could not be recalled, and which bound him to its observance for the remainder of his life. The year of his probation having expired, the novice who resolved to continue steadfast in his profession, knelt before the altar, and the following was the ceremony of his admission as a monk.

§ 13. The abbot addressed the novices thus:—

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, out of his love to sinners, humbled Himself so as to take our flesh upon Him, and was willing to appear as the most lowly in the world, yet without sin. He reconciled us to God the Father; and us who were the children of wrath He made the children of adoption. By baptism He has given us the remission of all our sins; and the anger which we had incurred He has turned into pity. But since after the regeneration of baptism we have done many evil things, and, departing from Him, have in a sort lost the adoption of sons, of his free love He has shown to us the way of humility and repentance, by which we may again be reconciled to God. Let none of you, therefore, although oppressed by the weight of your sins, despair of his love; for He who was willing to be made flesh for sinners, daily pleads even for them with the Father.

§ 14. "You therefore, my children, who having left the world have taken refuge with God, standing before Him and his holy altar, and in the presence of your assembled brethren, let each of you with your own mouths declare whether you are willing to renounce the world and its pomps."

*The answer.*—"We will."

*The abbot.*—"Will you change your habits of life, and leave and renounce the affection of your kindred?"

*The answer.*—"We will."

*The abbot.*—"Will you profess obedience according to the rule of St. Benedict, renouncing even your own inclinations?"

*The answer.*—"We will."

Then shall the abbot say,—"May the Lord help you."

The novice, having professed obedience to the rule of the monastery, was clothed in the robe which the abbot had blessed upon the

altar; he then received the kiss of peace from the brethren, and thus became a member of their society.

§ 15. Beda had now become an inmate of the monastery of Wearmouth; he had renounced home and kindred, perhaps even the name by which he had previously been known; and had entered upon a new scene, new duties, new avocations. That he devoted himself to these with such assiduity as not only to have won the love of his equals, but to have earned the approbation of his superiors, while at the same time he profited largely by the opportunities of improvement afforded him, is clear from what we know of the whole tenor of his life. As it passes before us, we shall have abundant proof of the estimation in which he was held by those who had the best opportunities of forming an unprejudiced judgment. Reading, writing, and various other branches of study, pursued so far only as was consistent with the higher obligation of due attendance upon the services of the church, now chiefly occupied his mind. The constitution of a Benedictine monastery made ample provision for the training up of youth in the more useful branches of education; all acquirements, however, being viewed with especial reference to the extension of God's glory and the salvation of mankind.

§ 16. It is not easy for us in the present day, amid occupations so different from those which engaged the attention of the middle ages, and possessing advantages so superior in most respects to those which men at that time enjoyed,—it is not easy for us to form a true estimate of the character of monachism; nor is it the intention of the editor to enter upon the examination of this confessedly difficult question. Yet if it be possible to lay before the reader, in a concise form, some comprehensive notice by which he may be enabled to judge of that condition of life which now opened upon Beda, it is expedient that this be done; for we hence gain an insight into the system by which the mind of the future historian of England was framed, and which must necessarily have exercised a very considerable influence upon his subsequent character, and given a tone and bias to his writings.

§ 17. The Rule of St. Benedict, a document the authenticity of which cannot be doubted, and of which the authority is unquestionable, affords us the ready means of depicting the character which Benedict sought to form by his institutions. The first chapter, which treats of the duties of the brethren, is so important and so apposite withal, that an abridged translation of it is here introduced. According to St. Benedict, it was the duty of the monk, "in the first place to love the Lord his God with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his strength; and, in the second place, to love his neighbour as himself. To commit no murder, nor adultery, nor theft; not to covet, nor to bear false witness. To honour all men. To do unto others as he would have others do unto him. To deny himself, and to follow Christ. To chasten the body; not to follow after pleasures; to love fasting; to relieve the poor; to clothe the naked; to visit the sick; to bury the dead; to aid the distressed, and to comfort the sorrowing. To estrange himself from

the doings of the world, and to prefer nothing to the love of Christ. Not to act upon resentment, to nourish no malice, to have no treachery in the heart; to give no false peace; never to cease from acts of charity; not to swear, lest he become forsworn. To have truth in the heart and in the mouth. Not to render evil for evil. To do no injury, but patiently to suffer injury. To love his enemies. Not to curse those who curse him, but rather to bless them. To endure persecution for righteousness' sake. Not to be proud; to be no wine-bibber, no glutton, no sluggard, not lazy, no murmurer, no backbiter. To place his trust in God. To refer to God whatever is good in himself, and not to take it to himself; but to appropriate whatever is evil. To fear the day of judgment, to dread hell, and desire eternal life with all spiritual longing. Daily to have the apprehension of death before his eyes. Hourly to watch each action of life. To know for certain that God sees him in every place. Straightway to throw down before Christ the evil thoughts which enter into his heart, and to make them known to the spiritual father. To guard his mouth from wicked and naughty words. Not to love to speak much. To utter no words of vanity, or which are apt to provoke laughter. Not to love much merriment or levity. Willingly to hear sacred lessons; frequently to devote himself to prayer; daily in prayer to confess to God his past evil deeds, and to amend them for the future. Not to fulfil the desires of the flesh. To hate his own inclinations, and to obey the abbot's commands in all things, even should he do otherwise than is right, which God forbid! remembering the law of the Lord, 'All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not after their works.' [Matt. xxiii. 3.]

§ 18. "A monk ought not to wish to be called holy before he is so; but first to become what may truly be so styled. Daily to fulfil in his actions the commandments of God. To love chastity; to hate no one; to have no jealousy, no envy; to dislike discord, and to flee pride. To reverence his elders, to love his juniors, and in the love of Christ to pray for his enemies. To be at peace before the setting of the sun with those with whom he may have disagreed. And never to despair of God's mercy.

§ 19. "These," concludes the chapter, "are the instruments of our spiritual occupation, which, if they be performed night and day without ceasing, and ratified at the day of judgment, that reward shall be given us of the Lord, which He hath promised; and which 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.' [1 Cor. ii. 9.] And the workshop where we diligently perform all these things, is the cloister of the monastery, and constancy in the congregation."

§ 20. From a conviction that some outline of the discipline under which the mind of Beda was trained is necessary for the formation of a due estimate of his character, the editor has entered somewhat fully into the monastic system which prevailed in England at the period to which our history has reference. We must not look at Beda, for the first time, when his character has been formed

and his habits of thought and feeling matured; if we do so we shall probably form a faulty as well as an imperfect estimate. The standing point which we take must be such, that from it we command a comprehensive view; we must be in such a position that we can notice the growth of his being, and understand the influences which conspired to develope and ripen the germ of his intellect.

From what we read of Benedict Biscop, the abbot of Wearmouth, when Beda became its inmate, there is every reason to conclude that in his practice he would endeavour fully to carry out the theory of his Italian namesake. The information respecting him which has descended to us, is derived almost exclusively from the writings of our historian, and through him we become possessed of an outline of the life of the person whose example and admonitions had such an influence upon his own, and by whose labours he so abundantly profited. We learn from this authority,[1] that Benedict Biscop was of noble descent, and at an early period of his life became a resident at the court of Osuiu, king of Bernicia, from whom he received a grant of land corresponding to his rank and condition. About the twenty-fifth year of his age he renounced the world and its possessions; and having resolved to devote himself to the service of Christ, he received the tonsure, and was instructed in the Benedictine rule at the celebrated monastery of Lerins, which he visited in A.D. 665, when making his second journey to Rome. Here he remained for two years, after which he completed his mission to the then metropolis of the world. He was resident in that city in 669, when Ecgberct, king of Kent, sent thither Wighard, that he might receive ordination at the hands of the pope, as archbishop of Canterbury: but before this ceremony could be performed, the whole of the English deputation was cut off by pestilence. The pope nominated Theodore, a native of Tarsus, to the vacant archbishopric, and having associated with him Adrian, an Italian abbot, he committed both to the care of Benedict, fully sensible of the advantages which the foreigners would derive from his guidance, advice, and introduction. They arrived in safety at the end of their journey; Theodore took possession of his see, and Benedict was entrusted with the rule of the monastery of St. Peter's at Canterbury. Here, however, he remained no longer than two years; he then transferred the care of his monks to Adrian, and for the third time visited Rome. The more peculiar object of this expedition at this time appears to have been the acquisition of books; at least, the fact of such an acquisition is brought prominently forward by Beda. Having amassed a valuable collection, partly by gift, partly by purchase, some at Rome, some at Vienne in Gaul, he returned homewards; but on his arrival in England, he heard of the unexpected death of Coinualch, king of Wessex, whom he had intended to visit.

§ 21. His plans having been thus thwarted, instead of returning to Kent, he bent his footsteps, after a long absence, to his birth-place.

[1] See the present volume, p. 604.

Here he was cordially received by Ecgfrith, who shortly before had ascended the throne of Northumbria. The king listened attentively to the conversation of the pilgrim monk; heard him discourse of what he had seen in Kent, Gaul, and Italy; looked with respect upon the volumes which he had collected, and with reverence upon the relics of the saints which he exhibited; and, as we have already mentioned, he gave him that tract of land upon which he resolved to build the monastery of Wearmouth.

§ 22. This donation, and the duties which it involved, called into exercise the untiring zeal of the abbot. Resolving to construct his monastery in the best and most solid style of masonry, so that it should be adapted to the Roman system of ritual and worship, to which he was warmly attached, in contradistinction to the more simple form introduced by the Scoto-Irish monks at Lindisfarne, he went over to France, and returned with skilful workmen, fully qualified to carry out the designs of the architect. Such was the energy with which their labours were conducted, that within the space of one year from the time when the foundations had been laid, the work was so far advanced as to be roofed over, and mass was then celebrated within the completed building.

§ 23. But though the building was completed, its decorations were not such as satisfied Benedict's exalted ideas of ecclesiastical splendour; and he resolved that no pains should be spared, no expense grudged, in the attainment of this his favourite object. France once more supplied him with workmen, who filled the windows of the church with glass, an art hitherto unknown to the English; and from the same country he obtained such vessels and vestments necessary for the service of the altar, as could not be procured at home. Yet, unsatisfied with the treasures he had thus acquired, he once more, and for the fifth time, visited Rome, determined to possess himself of whatever he conceived to be yet wanting in that degree of splendour, to which he sought to raise his monastery of Wearmouth. Beda gives us an interesting account of his acquisitions upon this occasion. As might have been expected, he assigns the first place to the books, which were very numerous, and of all kinds. The relics of the apostles and martyrs are next mentioned. A most important feature was the introduction of the Roman system of church-music, and of conducting the church-service generally, pope Agatho having sent with him into Britain for this purpose, John the chanter; who not only trained the English monks in the Roman method of singing, but moreover composed some treatises upon this art, which Beda mentions as being still preserved in his time, in the library of the monastery. Benedict brought also with him on his return a papal bull, by which the new foundation was exempted from all external interference. And, lastly, he imported various works of art for the ornament of the new church. Its middle division was adorned with paintings representing the blessed Virgin Mary, and the twelve Apostles; the southern portion was devoted to the representation of the gospel history; on the wall towards the north were depicted subjects taken from the book of the Revelation of St. John.

"Thus," says Beda, "whosoever entered the church, even though unable to read, had before their eyes, wherever they looked, the representation of the loving countenance of Christ and his saints; or their minds were stirred up by recollecting the grace of our Lord's incarnation; or having, as it were, before them the strictness of the last judgment, they might remember the duty of still stricter self-examination."

§ 24. Such was the residence in which Beda now found himself, such the instructor to whose guidance he was intrusted. If the rule of St. Benedict, in defining the duties of a monk, strove to impress deeply on his mind the importance, or rather the necessity, of humility and obedience, it no less earnestly urged upon the abbot the duty of affectionate forbearance towards those over whom he was placed; and it solemnly and repeatedly urged him to consider the responsibility of his station. He was admonished that he should neither teach, nor command, nor do, anything contrary to the law of the Lord, but that he should show forth whatever is good and holy, and that by deeds rather than by words. He should be no respecter of persons, or if any preference be shown, it should be in favour of those who excel in good actions, in humility and obedience. Remembering how difficult is the task which he has undertaken, he should adapt himself to the varied tempers of those over whom he is placed, so as to win some by kindness, and to constrain others, when necessary, by severity. Throughout his whole administration he should constantly bear in mind that he is responsible, not so much for the things of time as those of eternity; and that since he has taken on himself the care of immortal souls, for them he must hereafter render an account to God.

§ 25. The liberality of Ecgfrith, king of Northumbria, was not exhausted by his endowment of the monastery of Wearmouth, munificent though this had been; for eight years afterwards he made a grant of forty hides of land for the establishment of a second institution of a similar character. This gift enabled Benedict to build the monastery of St. Paul's, at Jarrow.[1] A little colony of monks set out from the parent establishment to take on themselves the cares and the responsibilities of the new foundation; in number they were twenty-two, of whom ten only were tonsured monks, the other twelve yet looked forward to the attainment of that rank. One of these, it would appear, was Beda. It is certain that he was transferred by Benedict Biscop to the care of Ceolfrith, abbot of Jarrow, and it is highly probable that the change took place upon this occasion. Yet it could hardly be called a change. The two monasteries were situated at no great distance from each other; the monks were united by those ties which, by giving unity of feelings and interests, produce mutual attachments; and so identified were they in all respects, that Beda regarded them as one single monastery.

§ 26. In the year 686 England was visited with another pesti-

[1] I know not upon what authority some modern writers have changed this name into "Yarrow." The spelling and pronunciation of the neighbourhood is decidedly Jarrow.

lence, which devastated the monastery of which Beda was an inmate. It swept away every monk instructed in the choral service, with the exception of Ceolfrith and one little boy, who still continued, in the midst of his tears and sorrows, to chant the canonical hours. Dr. Lingard supposes that this "little boy" was no other than Beda himself; and the conjecture is probable. The mortality which was so fatal to others spared him, and in this monastery he spent the remainder of his days. The situation in which he was thus placed was well calculated to strengthen that taste for literature which he had probably derived from his earliest instructor Benedict, whose choice and extensive collection of books would at once stimulate and gratify his thirst for knowledge. On his death-bed the abbot gave particular instructions as to the preservation of his collection of books; and not only were these instructions attended to, but additions were made from time to time to the monastic library by his successors. A Benedictine monastery, consisting of more than six hundred monks,[1] endowed with princely revenues,[2] and governed by an abbot deeply interested in the promotion of literature, must in all probability have produced many learned men, whose studies and example were likely to have an influence on a young and enthusiastic scholar.

§ 27. Such then was Jarrow, where Beda spent the greater portion of his life. His earlier years were occupied, as he himself tells us, in studying the Holy Scriptures, in observing the duties required by the monastic rules, and in joining in the psalmody which formed a prominent part of the daily services of the church. It is highly probable that he profited by the instructions of John, the arch-chanter, who had accompanied Benedict Biscop from Rome to England, and who afterwards resided at Wearmouth for a considerable period.[3] It has also been conjectured that he was educated by some of the disciples of Theodore and Adrian, of Canterbury, whose intimate acquaintance with the Greek and Latin languages he mentions in terms of the highest admiration.[4] It is more certain, for we have it upon his own authority, that one of his instructors was Trumberht,[5] who had studied under Ceadda, bishop of Lichfield.

§ 28. "In my nineteenth year," says Beda,[6] "I received deacon's orders, and in my thirtieth I entered into the office of the priesthood;" circumstances which show not only that he had made considerable progress in his studies, but that his piety was well

[1] See this volume, p. 617, § 17.

[2] It is stated, in the anonymous history of the Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow, that these monasteries, at the time of Ceolfrith's death, had land belonging to them which was nearly equivalent to the support of one hundred and fifty families; a mode of reckoning which, when employed in Beda's "Historia Ecclesiastica," is rendered in the Saxon paraphrase by "hides." The term "hide" is, it is true, somewhat indefinite; but it signifies at least as much land as one plough could cultivate in one year, which, at the lowest calculation of the early glossarists, is one hundred acres. (Thus Brompton, Decem Script. col. 887:—"Hida autem Anglice vocatur terra unius aratri culturæ sufficiens per annum.") Thus, then, it appears that at this time Wearmouth and Jarrow possessed at least 15,000 acres of land.

[3] Eccl. Hist. § 306; Life of St. Benedict, § 6.

[4] Eccl. Hist. §§ 253, 254, 256.

[5] Ibid. § 263.

[6] Ibid. § 454.

known to his abbot, who presented him for ordination, and to the bishop of his diocese. For it had been decreed by several councils,[1] the authority of which was acknowledged in England,[2] that none should be admitted to the order of deacon until twenty-five years old; and the few exceptions which were made to this rule were always in favour of individuals of acknowledged intellectual attainments and sanctity of life. It may be added, that the priesthood was conferred upon Beda as soon as he could canonically receive it, that is, at the age of thirty; and that he was ordained both deacon and priest by the celebrated John of Beverley, bishop of Hexham, within whose diocese, and not that of Lindisfarne, the monastery of Jarrow must have been situated.

§ 29. The historian,[3] William of Malmesbury, informs us that so widely had Beda's reputation extended, that pope Sergius was anxious to have the advice of our countryman in the decision of certain questions of more than ordinary importance and difficulty. In confirmation of this statement he cites portions of a letter addressed by that pontiff to Ceolfrith, abbot of Jarrow, in which he is requested to lose no time in sending Beda to Rome. We have, however, his own authority for asserting that he was not one of the monks of Jarrow who visited Rome in 701;[4] and also for stating that the letters which he inserted in his Ecclesiastical History were procured for him from the papal Regesta, by the kindness of Nothelm,[5] whose services would not have been required had Beda himself been upon the spot. He also[6] tells us distinctly that the whole of his life was spent at Jarrow and within its immediate neighbourhood. These conflicting statements have given rise to much difference of opinion; some writers, as the Bollandists,[7] rejecting the letter introduced by Malmesbury, as if it were a palpable forgery; while others[8] are inclined to receive it as true, upon the supposition that Beda's stay in the papal court was too short to be regarded as any interruption to his residence in his own country.

§ 30. In an edition of the Historia Ecclesiastica, published by the English Historical Society in 1838, the editor of the present work endeavoured to solve this difficulty by the supposition that this statement originated with Malmesbury; who, having met with a copy of a letter from Sergius to Ceolfrith, in which the pope

[1] As for example, the Fourth Council of Arles (A.D. 524, ap. Labbe, iv. 1622), § 1, and the fourth canon of the Quini-Sext Council (A.D. 680-1, ibid. vi. 1149). See also Bingham, II. xx. § 20.

[2] See the Excerptiones Egberti, arch. Ebor. ap. Thorpe's Ancient Laws and Institutes of England, § xciii. vol. ii. p. 110.

[3] Gesta Regum, § 57, vol. i. p. 85, ed. Hardy, Lond. 1840; fol. 11, C, ed. Saville, Lond. 1596.

[4] De Temporum Ratione, cap. xlv. Opp. ii. 154, ed. Basil. 1563. "Denique, anno ab Ejus Incarnatione juxta Dionysium septingentesimo primo, indictione quartadecima, patres nostri, qui tunc fuere Romæ, hoc modo se in Natali Domini in cereis S. Mariæ scriptum vidisse, et inde descripsisse referebant, 'A passione Domini nostri Jesu Christi anni sunt dclxviii.'"

[5] See Eccl. Hist. § 2. [6] Ibid. § 454.

[7] Acta SS. Maii, vi. 719, § 8.

[8] Mabillon, Vit. Bedæ, ap. Acta SS. ord. S. Bened. III. i. 509, § 10; Annal. ord. S. Bened. xviii. § 2.

requested that the abbot would send one of his monks to Rome, hastily concluded that Beda must have been that individual; and without adverting to the chronological difficulties which attended such a supposition, unjustifiably interpolated Beda's name into his text; and further, that he designated him as "presbyter," a rank to which he did not attain until some time after the death of Sergius. In confirmation of this theory, the present editor then printed a copy of the letter as it stands in a manuscript,[1] written in the eleventh century, which, therefore, presents us with an authority earlier and better than that of Malmesbury; and he stated that in this version of the letter, the name of Beda, and his designation as "presbyter" does not occur. The letter is so important for the illustration of what is obviously a most interesting question connected with the life of our historian, that no apology is made for presenting the following translation of it to the reader, that he may be enabled the more readily to form his own conclusion upon the question. It is here translated from the Cotton manuscript:—

§ 31. "*Sergius, the bishop, the servant of the servants of God, to Ceolfrith, the holy abbot and priest, sendeth greeting*:— With what words and in what manner can we declare the kindness and unspeakable providence of our God, and return fitting thanks for his boundless benefits towards us, who has led us out of darkness and the shadow of death to the light of the knowledge of Himself? . . . . We give you to understand that we have received the favour of the offering which your devout piety has sent to us by the present bearer, with the same joy and good-will with which it was transmitted; and we offer up our prayers to God and his apostles for the preservation of the purity of your conscience, that He, by whose preaching we have come to the light of the truth, would grant great favours in return for small ones, and an everlasting reward in the kingdom of heaven.

"Yielding to the timely and worthy prayers of your laudable anxiety with the closest devotion, we entreat of your pious goodness, so acceptable to God, that since there have occurred certain points of ecclesiastical discipline, which should not be published without more matured deliberation, which have made it necessary for us to confer with a person skilled in the literature of the arts, as becomes an assistant of God's holy catholic mother-church, you would not delay paying ready obedience to this our admonition, but would send without loss of time to our lowly presence at the venerable church of the chief apostles, your friends and protectors, the lords Peter and Paul, a religious[2] servant of our God, belonging to your venerable monastery, whom, God willing, you may expect to return in safety, when, by God's permission, the necessary discussion of these aforesaid points shall have been solemnly completed. For whatever shall be advantageously added to the church at large, and to the holy and devout college, will, we trust, be

[1] MS. Cotton. Tiber. A. xv. fol. 6. b.

[2] Malmesbury here reads, "Beda, a religious servant of God, a venerable priest of your monastery."

profitable to all those persons also who are committed to your own immediate care."[1]

§ 32. On the other hand, it is contended by Hardy, and from him by Wright and Giles, that before it can be admitted as a just inference that Malmesbury interpolated the passage in question, it must be shown that this same Cottonian manuscript was the identical copy of the letter which he used; a conclusion which, as they affirm, cannot be fairly drawn, since it is incredible but that other copies of the letter must have been extant when Malmesbury wrote. They maintain also that it ought rather to be contended that the one which he saw must have contained the passage in dispute; for that historian (whose great integrity is admitted by all writers) several times expressly declares, that he declines inserting anything into his narrative for which he had not the best authority. The present editor willingly admits the weight of these arguments, and accepts the solution which was long ago proposed by Alford,[2] and from him by Cressy[3] and Wilkins.[4] Admitting, therefore, that Malmesbury's version of the letter is correct, and that Beda was invited by name, we may suppose, along with these authors, that the death of pope Sergius[5] — intelligence of which must have reached England shortly after the arrival of the letter—released him from the labours of the journey.

§ 33. It is not difficult to imagine that Beda's reputation as a scholar and divine would draw around him a crowd of disciples. The names of some of his more favoured pupils are preserved by himself, in the dedications to such of his works as were undertaken at their suggestiôn, or for their especial benefit. Among these we may notice Huactberht, to whom he dedicated his treatise "De Ratione Temporum,"[6] and his "Exposition upon the Revelation;"[7] Wigberct,[8] for whom he wrote his book "Upon the Art of Poetry;" Constantine,[9] for whose use he composed a dissertation concerning the division of numbers; and, lastly, Nothelm,[10] presbyter of London, and afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, at whose request he solved thirty questions which have reference to the books of Kings. Although there were probably other disciples, whose names he does not specify, yet we can by no means agree with Vincent of Beauvais (Speculum Histor. xxiii. 173), in including among the number Rhabanus Maurus, who was not born until fifty years after Beda's death, nor the more celebrated Alcuin, as some writers erroneously have done; a question for the investigation of which a

[1] Baronius (Annal. A.D. 701, § 2,) prints the same letter, apparently from a manuscript copy of Malmesbury, but the variations are unimportant. Another copy is also extant in a MS. at Durham, but a comparison of its text with that from which the translation above given is made, and with Malmesbury, leads to no results worthy of notice.

[2] Annal. A.D. 701, § 3.

[3] Church History of Britanny, A.D. 729, § 13.

[4] Concil. Magn. Brit. i. 63.

[5] He died early in September, 701; Jaffé, Regest. Pont. Rom. p. 172; Papebroch. Conatus ad Catal. Pontiff, p. iii.

[6] Opp. ii. 49.

[7] Opp. v. 1058

[8] Opp. i. 34.

[9] Ibid. 160.

[10] Opp. viii. 232, ed. Giles.

more appropriate opportunity will occur when we are employed in tracing the history of that eminent scholar.

§ 34. Beyond the few circumstances which have now been mentioned, there is little of any moment to state respecting the life of Beda. By identifying the history of the monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow with his biography, it might be easy to lay before the reader a summary of the events in which Beda probably took a share; but these, however interesting in themselves, are rather the history of the times than the individual; for we have no ground for supposing that he took any prominent part in the public transactions of either establishment. We are justified in concluding that his life glided on in the undisturbed tranquillity of monastic seclusion, occupied alternately in the duties of religion and in the service of literature, and, consequently, diversified by none of those changes of scene or occupation which furnish the legitimate materials for biography. His death was as quiet as his life; and in speaking of it we cannot do better than lay before our readers the touching picture which has been drawn by one of his own disciples who was present at his decease, and by him transmitted to another.

§ 35. "*To Cuthwin,*[1] *his most dearly-beloved fellow-student in Christ, his fellow-disciple, Cudberet,*[2] *wishes eternal health in the Lord.* I most gladly received the gift which you sent, and most gratefully did I read the letters written by your devotion and learning, in which I found (what indeed I chiefly desired), that you would diligently celebrate holy masses and prayers for Beda, the beloved master and father of us both, in God. Wherefore, out of my affection for him, it is the more gratifying to me to comply with your request, and to tell you briefly, but to the best of my ability, the manner in which he passed from this present world.

"He had been labouring under a severe attack of difficulty of breathing, yet without pain, for nearly two weeks before the day of our Lord's Resurrection [April 17], and in this state continued, cheerful, and rejoicing, and giving thanks to Almighty God, both day and night, even every hour, until Ascension-day, the seventh day before the kalends of June[3] [26th May]. He daily instructed us, his disciples, and spent the remainder of the day in the singing of psalms, and continued awake during the whole night, in joy and thanksgiving, excepting when interrupted by a moderate sleep. On awaking he returned to his accustomed occupations, and with outstretched hands ceased not to give thanks to God. He was, in truth, a blessed man. He chanted the passage from St. Paul, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God' [Heb. x. 31], and

[1] This letter has been repeatedly printed, with various degrees of accuracy, and may be found in Leland's Collect. iii. 84; Simeon of Durham, p. 8; Mabillon, Acta SS. ord. S. Bened. III. i. 503; in the preface to Whelock's Beda; Baronii Annal. A.D. 731, § 20; Ep. Bonif. cxiii.; Opp. Bedæ, viii. 1135, ed. 1563; Acta SS. Maii, vi. 721. It is here translated from a collation of the above texts with MS. Burney, 297; Harl. 3680; Digby, 211; Fairfax, 12; and Digby, 59.

[2] Another letter written by this Cuthbert occurs among the Epistles of Boniface, in which he speaks with the greatest affection of his master Beda.

[3] There has been some misapprehension as to the exact day of Beda's death, but the chronological details of the text are too clear to admit of dispute or difficulty.

many other passages of Holy Writ, in which he admonished us to rise from the sleep of the soul, by anticipating the last hour. And being skilled in our poetry, he thus spoke, in the Saxon language, of the awful departure of the soul from the body :—

Before[1] the need-fare,
No man becometh
Of thought more prudent
Than is needful to him
To consider
Before his departure
What, to his spirit,
Of good or evil
After his death-day
Will be adjudged.

§ 36. "He also sang anthems, as well for our consolation[2] as his own, one of which was the following :—'O King of glory, God of might, who didst ascend to-day in triumph above all heavens, leave us not orphans, but send upon us the promise of the Father, the Spirit of truth. Halleluiah!' And when he came to the words, 'Leave us not orphans,' he burst into tears and wept much ; and after the space of an hour, he resumed the repetition of what he had begun : as we heard, we wept along with him. One while we read, another while we wept ; and our reading was always mingled with tears. In such kind of joy as this we passed the quinquagesimal[3] days between Easter up to the day which I have mentioned ; and he rejoiced exceedingly, and thanked God, who had thus thought him worthy of suffering. He frequently repeated the text, 'God scourgeth every son whom He receiveth,' [Heb. xii. 6,] and many other passages of holy Scripture. He also quoted the sentiment of St. Ambrose :—'I have not so lived that I am ashamed to continue longer among you ; nor do I fear to die, because our God is merciful.'

§ 37. "In addition to the lessons which we received from him, and the singing of psalms, he strove all this time to finish two very important works—the Gospel, namely, of St. John, which he was translating into Saxon for the use of the church, and certain extracts from the books of the Rotæ of St. Isidore.[4] 'I am unwilling,' he said, 'that my children should read what is not

[1] The Saxon verses from which these lines are translated occur only in a few copies, and in these they are very considerably modernized and reduced to the dialect used in Wessex. But a MS. of great antiquity, and probably of Northumbrian origin, now belonging to the monastery of St. Gall, in Switzerland, has preserved them in a much purer and earlier form, approaching very closely to the language used by Beda himself. I am indebted to John M. Kemble, Esq., for a transcript of this precious document.

[2] Dr. Lingard, here adopting a different text, reads, "He also chanted the antiphons according to his and our custom;" and appends the following note:—"I conceive that by these words—'his and our custom'—Cuthbert alludes to the difference in the choral services; the Roman course having been introduced at Wearmouth and Jarrow, and the Scottish being probably retained in Cuthwin's monastery. The antiphon in the letter is that for the Magnificat on the feast for the Ascension according to the Roman course."—Anglo-Saxon Church, ii. 197, ed. 1845.

[3] The quinquagesimal days were the fifty days between Easter and Whitsunday, and were ordered to be kept as days of joy and triumph in honour of the resurrection. Lingard, ibid. See also Martene, De Antiq. Monach. Ritibus, III. xviii.

[4] This work has not been identified.

true, and after my death should labour unprofitably in this matter.' But when the third day of the week before our Lord's Ascension [24th of May] had arrived, his breathing became more laborious, and a slight swelling appeared in his feet; yet, during the whole of that, he taught and dictated cheerfully, and, among other remarks, sometimes said, 'Learn quickly, for I know not how long I may abide, nor how soon He who created me may take me away.' To us it appeared that he was well aware of his departure; and so he passed the night wakefully in the giving of thanks to God.

§ 38. "At the dawn of the fourth day of the week [Wednesday], he commanded us to write diligently that which we had begun, and this we did until the third hour [nine o'clock]. From that hour we walked in procession with the relics of the saints, as the custom[1] of that day demanded. But one of us remained with him, and said to him, 'Dearly beloved master, one chapter is still wanting; and it appears to be painful to you that I should ask any further questions.' But he said—'It does not trouble me. Take your pen, and be attentive, and write quickly.' At the ninth hour he said to me, 'I have a few things in my coffer which are of some value; namely,[2] spices, and stoles, and incense; but run quickly, and bring to me the presbyters of our monastery, that I may distribute among them these presents, trifling ones indeed, yet such as God hath given me. The rich men of this world are anxious to make presents of gold and silver, and other precious things; but I, with much love and joy, give to my brethren what I have received from God.' And this I did with trembling. He addressed each of the brethren individually, admonishing and entreating them that they should be diligent in celebrating masses and praying for him; and this they readily promised.

§ 39. "They all mourned and wept, chiefly because he told them that they should no longer see his face in the world; but they rejoiced when he said, 'It is time that I returned to Him who made me—who created me, and formed me out of nothing. I have had a long life upon the earth; the merciful Judge has also been pleased to ordain for me a happy life. The time of my departure is at hand, for I have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ.' And with many such like remarks he passed the day until eventide. Then the boy whom we have already mentioned said to him, 'Still one sentence, dear master, remains unwritten.' He replied, 'Write quickly.' After a little while, the boy said, 'Now the sentence is finished.' He answered, 'You have spoken the truth—it is indeed finished. Raise my head in your hands, for it pleases me much to recline opposite to that holy place of mine in which I used to pray, so that, while resting there, I may call upon God my Father.' And being placed upon the pavement of his cell, he said, 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost'—and as soon as he had named the name of the Holy Spirit, he breathed out his own spirit, and so departed to the kingdom of heaven.[3]

[1] "That is, the rubric for the Wednesday in Rogation week." Lingard, ii. 199.
[2] Instances of the distribution of similar gifts occur in the Epistles of Boniface.
[3] This seems to require a little explanation, for it is said that Beda died on

§ 40. "All those persons who either witnessed the death of our blessed father, or have heard of it, affirm that they have never seen any one meet death with so great devotion and tranquillity. For, as you have just heard, so long as the spirit was in the body he continued to sing 'Glory be to the Father,' and other spiritual songs, and ceased not, with outstretched hands, to render thanks to the living and the true God. Be assured of this also, dearest brother, that I could tell you many other things of him; but want of skill constrains brevity."

§ 41. Beda's remains were interred at Jarrow, and, according to Malmesbury,[1] the following lines were placed over his tomb :—

"Presbyter hic Beda requiescit carne sepultus.
Dona, Christe, animam in cœlis gaudere per ævum:
Daque illi sophiæ debriari fonte, cui jam
Suspiravit ovans intento semper amore."

Besides this epitaph, Mabillon[2] has printed a second, from a manuscript formerly belonging to De Thou; and others probably are in existence.

§ 42. The relics of such a man as Beda soon became of the greatest importance, even in a pecuniary point of view, to the establishment in which they were preserved, by attracting to his shrine a crowd of visitors with offerings. The cupidity or the jealousy of the neighbouring church of Durham was excited, and a presbyter, named Ælfred, the son of Westou, stole[3] the bones of our historian, and deposited them in the cathedral church, in which they now remain. When the relics of St. Cuthbert were translated in the year 1104, the bones of Beda were discovered in the same coffin,[4] from which they were then removed;[5] and some few years afterwards were placed by Hugh Pudsey, bishop of Durham, in a casket of gold and silver, and by him deposited in that part of the cathedral called the Galilee,[6] the building of which he had just then completed. He caused the following lines to be inscribed over them :—

"Continet hæc theca Bedæ Venerabilis ossa;
Sensum factori Christus dedit, æsque datori,
Petrus opus fecit; præsul dedit hoc Hugo donum.
Sic in utroque suum veneratus utrumque patronum."[7]

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Holy Thursday, and yet the narrative plainly informs us that the event took place on the evening of Wednesday. This apparent difficulty will vanish if we remember that the Saxons calculated their days from sunset to sunset, consequently Beda's dissolution having occurred after the sunset of Wednesday, was referred by Cuthbert to the Thursday, which had then, according to this estimate, actually commenced.

[1] De Regibus, i. 92, § 62, ed. Hardy.

[2] Acta SS. III. i. § 504.

[3] This theft was perpetrated between the years 1021 and 1041, and is confirmed as well by writers of considerable antiquity and authority, (Acta SS. Mart. iii. 133; Matt. vi. 723; Reginald. Dunelm. 57, ed. 1835,) as by the received tradition of many centuries. We hence gain an approximation to the date of the Saxon poem on the city of Durham, printed by Hickes in his Thesaurus, (Gram. Anglo-Sax. p. 179, ed. 1703,) since it speaks of the remains of Beda as resting in that church when these lines were written.

[4] Acta SS. ut supra, p. 139.

[5] Ibid. p. 140.

[6] Godwin, De Præsulibus Angliæ, p. 736.

[7] From a copy in the handwriting of Stowe, the antiquary, in the Harleian MS. 367, fol. 76.

Another translation would seem to have taken place in the year 1370, the record of which is preserved in the following inscription, copied from the same volume of transcripts made by Stowe :—[1]

> "Anno milleno tercentum septuageno
> Postquam Salvator carnem de Virgine sumpsit,
> Transtulit hoc feretrum Cuthberti de prope tumbam
> Istius ecclesiæ prior huc; poscente Ricardo,
> De Castro dicto Bernardi, cujus et ossa
> Non procul hinc lapide sub marmoreo requiescunt."

§ 43. In November, 1541, the shrine of Beda, along with other relics, was removed from the cathedral church of Durham. It is not difficult to anticipate the fate of the rich casket of bishop Pudsey's donation; the stone, however, on which it rested still remains, and is now transferred to the south side of the nave.[2] "The portion of the tunic of St. Beda the doctor," which is mentioned in the elaborate catalogue[3] of the relics there deposited, disappeared at the same time. Of greater interest are the personal memorials of a literary character, with which the name of Beda is associated, but considerable doubt hangs over the whole of them. At least two manuscripts are still extant, which claim the honour of having been transcribed by his pen. In the Cottonian[4] library are a few leaves written in a very ancient hand, an early possessor of which has stated that they formed a portion of St. Paul's Epistles, of which Beda was the copyist. Durham,—in which the smaller monastic establishments of Jarrow and Wearmouth merged,—contains another treasure of the same character, namely, a copy of Cassiodorus[5] upon the Psalter, (MS. B, ii. 30,) the penmanship of which is ascribed by a hand of the fourteenth century to Beda; and it must be admitted that this tradition, originating in such a locality, and corroborated by the appearance of the manuscript itself, which is of his age, is entitled to some degree of credit. Wanley[6] mentions that he had heard it reported that the celebrated Rushworth copy of the Gospels had once belonged to our historian; but he does not inform us of the evidence (if any,) upon which this statement was supported. All which we can assert is, that the manuscript is certainly of Beda's own time, and that the language in which it is glossed is Northumbrian.

§ 44. It took no long time for Beda's reputation to extend itself over Europe. Boniface, the apostle of Germany, Beda's contemporary, designated him as the candle sent by God for the spiritual illumination of the church, and requested to be furnished with copies of some of his writings for his own edification.[7] The like request was frequently urged by Lullus, the successor of

[1] From a copy in the handwriting of Stowe, the antiquary, in the Harleian MS. 367, fol. 76.

[2] See Raine's St. Cuthbert, (4, Durh. 1828,) pp. 98, 178, and also pp. 60, 94, 168.

[3] Smith's Beda, p. 742.

[4] MS. Cott. Vitell. C. viii. fol. 83. Wanley, in his Catalogue of Saxon MSS. appended to Hickes' Thesaurus, when describing this fragment (p. 241), remarks that he had formerly seen a copy of St. Paul's Epistles written by the same hand, and at that time deposited in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge.

[5] Rud's Catalogue of the Durham MSS. p. 128.

[6] Catalogue of Saxon MSS. p. 82.

[7] Epp. 37, 38.

Boniface in the see of Mentz, who presented to Cuthbert, abbot of Jarrow, (the author of the letter which has been translated above,) a cloth of silk in which to place the relics of his sainted master.[1] Towards the end of the same century in which Beda died, his praises were frequently and warmly celebrated by Alcuin;[2] and his sanctity was supposed to be established by the miracles which were believed to have been performed by his relics. It is unnecessary to cite the testimonies to the same effect which might be collected from the writings of Benedict of Anagni (A.D. 801), Hildewin (A.D. 814), Lupus (A.D. 830), Walafrid Strabo (A.D. 842), Paschasius Radbert (A.D. 844), Hincmar of Rheims (A.D. 845), and many others. The epithet of "venerable," by which he has been so universally distinguished, and which alone is sufficient to testify the estimation in which he was held, appears first to have been bestowed upon him in the ninth century, and is frequently employed by Amalarius of Treves (A.D. 810), Jonas, bishop of Orleans (A.D. 821), and other authors of the same period.

§ 45. Beda's high reputation was not unmerited; for the writings which he has left behind him give proof that he was distinguished alike by diversified genius, extensive reading, and sincere piety. He has left commentaries upon many of the books of the Old and New Testaments, exhibiting an intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures and the writings of the early fathers; and which are of great value in showing both the doctrine and discipline of the Anglo-Saxon church. His treatises upon chronology, arithmetic, astronomy, and cosmography, are more clear, comprehensive, and accurate, than those of his contemporaries or immediate successors; he was skilled in the theory and practice of music, and was no mean adept in the arithmetic and mathematics of his age. But we are more especially concerned in ascertaining his qualifications as the author of the historical works now brought before the public, which we shall proceed to consider in their order as they occur in the present volume.

§ 46. The scope of the Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation[3] is sufficiently indicated by its title. After some observations upon the position, inhabitants, and natural productions of Britain, the author gives a rapid sketch of its history from the earliest period until the arrival of Augustine in A.D. 597, at which era, in his opinion, the ecclesiastical history of our nation had its commencement. After that event, he treats, as was to be expected, for a time exclusively of the circumstances which occurred in Kent; but, as Christianity extended itself over the other kingdoms into which England was then divided, he gradually includes their history in his narrative, until he reaches the year 731. Here he concludes his work, which embraces a space of one hundred and thirty-four years, with a general outline of the ecclesiastical state of the island.

[1] Bonif. Epp. 114, 117, 121, 123.
[2] Poema De Pontiff. Ecclesiæ Ebor. l. 1315, ap. Alcuini Opp. ii. 254.
[3] See §§ 81, 90, 453.

§ 47. The Introduction, which extends from the commencement of the work to the conversion of the Saxons to Christianity, (§§ 4—51,) is gleaned, as Beda himself informs us (§ 2), from various writers. The chief sources for the description of Britain (§§ 4—9) are Pliny, Solinus, Orosius, and Gildas; St. Basil is also cited (§ 5); and the traditions which were current in Beda's own day are occasionally introduced (§ 7). The history of the Romans in Britain (§§ 9—34), is founded chiefly upon Orosius, Eutropius, and Gildas, corrected, however, in some places by the author, apparently from tradition or local information (§§ 9, 13, 28—30), and augmented by an account of the introduction of Christianity under Lucius (§ 12), of the martyrdom of St. Alban, copied apparently from some legend (§§ 16—20), and of the origin of the Pelagian heresy (§ 25),—all of them circumstances intimately connected with the ecclesiastical history of the island. The mention of Hengist and Horsa, and the allusion to the tomb of the latter at Horstead, render it probable that the account which Beda gives of the arrival of the Teutonic tribes, and their settlement in England (§§ 35, 36), was communicated by Albinus and Nothelm. It must, however, be received with considerable caution, its chief value consisting in this, that it represents, not so much the history, as the tradition, of the Jutish kingdom of Kent, as appears from circumstances mentioned elsewhere in this work (§ 44), as well as from the authorities there quoted. The two visits of Germanus to England (§§ 39—49), so important in the history of its religion, are introduced in the very words of Constantius Lugdunensis, and must therefore have been copied from that author. The ante-Augustine portion of the history is terminated by extracts from Gildas, relative to the conflicts between the Saxons and Britons (§§ 39, 50).

§ 48. As the mission of Augustine in A.D. 596 (§ 51) is the period at which Beda ceases to speak of himself as a compiler, and assumes the character of an historian, it becomes incumbent upon us to examine into the sources upon which he has founded this, by far the most interesting portion of his history. The materials which he employed seem to have consisted of (I.) written documents, and (II.) verbal information. (I.) The written materials may be divided into (1.) Historical information drawn up and communicated by his correspondents for the express purpose of being employed in his work; (2.) documents pre-existing in a narrative form, and (3.) transcripts of official documents.

§ 49. (1.) That Beda's correspondents drew up and communicated to him information which he used when writing this history, is certain from what he states in its prologue;[1] and it is highly probable that to them we are indebted for many particulars connected with the history of the kingdoms situated to the south of the river Humber, with which a monk of Jarrow, from his local position, was probably unacquainted. Traces of the assistance which he derived from Canterbury are perceptible in the minute acquaint-

[1] The passages, for instance, in which he acknowledges his obligations to Nothelm and Cyniberct.

ance which he exhibits not only with the topography of Kent (§ 54), but with its condition at the time when he wrote (§§ 148, 449); and the same remark is applicable, although in a more limited degree, to most of the other southern kingdoms (§§ 289, 298, 300, 314).

§ 50. (2.) Documents pre-existing in an historical form are seldom quoted: amongst those of which use has been made may be numbered the Life of Gregory the Great, written by Paulus Diaconus (§ 82); the Miracles of Ethelburga, abbess of Barking (§§ 275—282); the Life of Sebbi, king of the East Saxons (§ 283); the Legend of Fursey (§§ 204—208); and that of Cuthbert of Lindisfarne (§ 346[1]), formerly written by Beda, but now augmented by himself, with additional facts. These, together with some extracts from the treatise of Arcuulf de Locis Sanctis (§§ 404—407), are all the written documents to which the author refers.

§ 51. That other narratives, however, were in Beda's possession, of which he has made liberal use, is certain from his express words (§ 2), and may also be inferred from internal evidence. Albinus and Nothelm appear to have furnished him with materials, in which he found accurate and full information upon the pedigrees (§ 101), accessions (§§ 172, 252, 271, 342), marriages (§§ 54, 102), exploits (§§ 55—57, 104, 105, &c.), descendants (§§ 111, 172), deaths (§§ 101, 172, 252, 342), and burials (§ 101, &c.) of the kings of Kent. From the same source he derived his valuable account of the archbishops of Canterbury, both before and after their ordination (§ 375), the place and date of consecration (§§ 140, 209, 375), even though it took place abroad (§§ 58, 274), the days on which they severally took possession of that see (§§ 256, 375), the duration of their episcopate (§§ 209, 256, 374), their deaths (§§ 106, 140, 209, 252, 374), burial-places (§§ 107, 374), and the intervals which elapsed before the election of a successor (§ 209). It is evident that the minuteness and accuracy of this information could have been preserved only by means of contemporary written memoranda. That such records existed in the time of the Saxons cannot be doubted, for Beda introduces a story by which it appears (§§ 294, 295) that the abbey of Selsey possessed a volume in which were entered the obits of eminent individuals; and the same custom probably prevailed throughout the other monastic establishments of England.

§ 52. The history of the diocese of Rochester was communicated by Albinus and Nothelm. It is exceedingly barren of particulars (§§ 209, 287, 375), and probably would have been even more so, had not it been connected with the life of Paulinus of York (§§ 149, 187), concerning whom Beda appears to have obtained information from other quarters.

§ 53. The early annals of East Anglia are equally scanty, as we have little more than a short pedigree of its kings (§ 134), an account of its conversion to Christianity (§§ 134, 135), the history of Sigebert and Anna (§§ 199, 201), and a few particulars regarding its bishops, Felix, Thomas, Bertgils, and Bisi (§§ 209, 271), which

[1] See also the preface to the present volume, § 95.

details were communicated in part by Albinus and Nothelm (§ 2).

§ 54. The history of the West Saxons was derived partly from the same authorities (§ 2), and partly from the information of Daniel, bishop of Winchester (§ 2). It relates to their conversion by Birinus (§§ 167—171), the reigns of Caedualla and of Ini (§§ 372, 373), and the pontificate of Uuini (§ 243), Aldhelm, and Daniel (§ 410). To this last-named bishop we are indebted for a portion of the little of what is known as to the early history of the South Saxons and the Isle of Wight (§ 2), the last of the Saxon kingdoms which embraced the Christian faith. It relates to the conversion of those districts by the agency of Wilfrith (§§ 289—291). A few unimportant additions are afterwards made in a hurried and incidental manner (§§ 342, 411), evidently showing that Beda's information upon this head was neither copious nor definite.

§ 55. The monks of Laestingaeu furnished materials relative to the ministry of Cedd and Ceadda, by whose preaching the Mercians were induced to renounce paganism (§ 2). The history of this kingdom is obscure, and consists of an account of its conversion (§ 211), the succession of its sovereigns and its bishops. The neighbouring state of Middle Anglia, which, if ever independent of Mercia, soon merged in it, is similarly circumstanced; and we are perhaps indebted to its connexion with the princes and bishops of Northumbria for what is known of its early history (§§ 210—212).

§ 56. Lindsey, part of Lincolnshire, although situated so near to the kingdom of Northumbria, was both politically and ecclesiastically independent of it, and Beda was as ignorant of the transactions of that province as of those which were much more remote from Jarrow. He received some materials from bishop Cyniberct (§ 2), but they appear to have been scanty, for the circumstances which relate to Lincolnshire are generally derived from the information of other witnesses (§§ 2, 136, 180—183).

§ 57. The history of East Saxony is more copious, and is derived partly from the communications of Albinus and Nothelm (§ 2), and partly from the monks of Laestingaeu (§ 2). To the first of these two sources we must probably refer the account of the pontificate of Mellitus (§§ 95, 99, 105), and the apostasy of the sons of Saberct (§ 103),—circumstances too intimately connected with the see of Canterbury to be omitted in its annals. To the latter we are indebted for the history of the re-conversion of East Saxony (§§ 213, 216),—an event in which the monks of Laestinghaeu were interested, as it was accomplished by their founder Cedd (§§ 217—219). From them Beda also received an account of the ministry of Ceadda (§§ 220, 244, 258, 259). Some further details respecting its civil and ecclesiastical affairs (§§ 250, 251), the life of Earconuuald, bishop of London (§ 273), and the journey of Offa to Rome (§ 412), conclude the information which we have respecting this kingdom.

§ 58. In the history of Northumbria, Beda, as a native, was particularly interested, and would probably exert himself to procure

the most copious and authentic information regarding it. Although he makes no allusion to having had access to previous historical documents, when speaking of his sources of information (§ 2), yet there seems reason to believe that he has made use of such materials. We may infer from what he says of the mode in which Osuald's reign was generally calculated (§§ 151, 175), that in this king's time there existed Annals or Chronological Tables, in which events were inserted as they occurred, the regnal year of the monarch who then filled the throne being at the same time specified. These annals appear to have extended beyond the period of the conversion of Northumbria to Christianity (§§ 80, 94), although it is difficult to imagine how any chronological calculation or record of events could be preserved before the use of letters had become known. But the history of Eadwin, with its interesting details, shows that Beda must have had access to highly valuable materials which reached back to the very earliest era of authentic history; and we need not be surprised at finding information of a similar character throughout the remainder of his history of Northumbria. Accordingly we have minute accounts of the pedigrees of its kings (§§ 133, 146, 148, 150, 180, 187, 188, 322, 323, 327, &c.), their accession (§§ 187, 267, 340, 341, 409, &c.), exploits (§§ 150, 151, 187, 188, &c.), anecdotes of them, and sketches of their character, (§§ 152, 156, 165, 166, 189, &c.), their deaths, and the duration of their reigns (§§ 151, 175, 188, &c.),—details too minute in themselves, and too accurately defined by Beda, to have been derived by him from tradition. Similar proofs might, if necessary, be drawn from the history of its bishops.

§ 59. (3.) The Historia Ecclesiastica contains various transcripts of important official documents. These are of two classes, either such as were sent from the papal court to the princes and ecclesiastics of England, or were the production of native writers. The first were transcribed from the Papal Regesta by Nothelm of London, during a residence at Rome, and were sent to Beda by the advice of his friend Albinus of Canterbury (§ 2). They relate to the history of the kingdoms of Kent (§§ 52, 53, 59—73, 74—76, 108, 141) and Northumbria (§§ 115, 120, 139, 246). The letters of archbishops Laurentius and Honorius, concerning the proper time for celebrating Easter (§§ 98, 143), were probably furnished by the same individual. The proceedings of the councils of Herutford (§ 268) and Haethfeld (§ 302) may have been derived from the archives of Beda's own monastery, since it was customary in the early ages of the church for each ecclesiastical establishment to have a "tabularium,"[1] in which were deposited the synodal decrees by which its members were governed.

§ 60. (II.) A considerable portion of the Historia Ecclesiastica, especially that part of it which relates to the ancient kingdom of Northumbria, is founded upon local information which its author derived from various individuals. On almost every occasion Beda gives the name and designation of his informant, being anxious,

[1] Augusti, Handbuch der Christl. Archäologie, iii 699, ed. 1837; Thomassin, Vetus et Nova Ecclesiæ Disciplina, i. 561, ed. Lugd. 1706.

apparently, to show that nothing is inserted for which he had not the testimony of some respectable witness. Many incidents he doubtless related upon his own authority; for the truth of some (§ 400) he himself vouches from his own observation. Some of his witnesses are credible from having been present at the event which they related (§§ 83, 363 &c.); others, from the high rank which they held in the church, such as Acca, bishop of Hexham (§ 185); Guthfrith, abbot of Lindisfarne (§ 359); Bercthun, abbot of Beverley (§§ 362, 364); and Pecthelm, bishop of Whithern (§ 399). The author received secondary evidence with caution; for he distinguishes between the statements which he received from eye-witnesses, and those which reached him through a succession of informants. In the last of these instances the channel of information is always pointed out with scrupulous exactness, whatever opinion we may entertain (as in the case of some of the visions and miracles) of the credibility of the facts themselves.

§ 61. If it be important to inquire into the sources whence Beda derived his information, it is no less necessary to endeavour to ascertain how far he employed them with judgment and fidelity. That he wrote candidly and conscientiously will appear from the following considerations. The work was undertaken at the suggestion of Albinus and Nothelm, from whom, as the subjects of another kingdom and the residents in another diocese, he could expect no political or ecclesiastical advantages. His History, though inscribed to Ceolwulf, the reigning king of Northumbria, is remarkably free from flattery; and yet it is obvious that, had he been so inclined, there could have been no difficulty in its introduction. Had the writer been pleased to administer it, he might have done so in a more subtle form by expatiating upon the exploits of the ancestors of his patron, if not upon his own, since in his person a new dynasty became seated on the throne of Northumbria; but so far from this being the case, the ancestors of Ceolwulf are unknown to us as far as Beda is concerned, and his slight mention of that sovereign is cold, almost to censure (§ 448). And, as he did not condescend to feed the vanity of his sovereign, so neither did he give any partial account in favour of his own kingdom; for had such been his intention, he would have drawn a less just character of Ecgfrith (§ 340), the monarch by whom the monasteries of Jarrow and Wearmouth were founded and endowed.

§ 62. Beda tells us that he had laid down for himself this fundamental maxim, that it was incumbent for him, as for every historian, simply to recount those circumstances which he had received upon credible authority (§ 2); and he more than once reminds his readers that he continued throughout his narrative to act upon this principle (§§ 197, 399). It is also observable that, although a firm adherent to the church of Rome in regard to the warmly-disputed questions concerning the observance of Easter, the tonsure and confirmation, yet he does ample justice to the merits of those who embraced the opposite doctrines (§§ 155, 162, 163, 191, 197, &c.). These considerations seem to warrant us in coming to the conclusion that Beda was diligent in collecting and faithful in employing his

materials, both written and oral; and although he is sparing in his observations upon the causes of events and the motives of the actors, yet the narrative of the events itself is generally clear, temperate, and impartial.

§ 63. It is unnecessary for our present purpose that we should give any extended bibliographical list of the various editions of the "Historia Ecclesiastica." The earliest has neither date, nor name of place or printer; but it issued (apparently)[1] from the press of Eggesteyn, of Strasburg, about the year 1473.[2] Stroth mentions editions printed at the same place in 1483, and at Spires in 1493,[3] the existence of which is somewhat doubtful, but the statement is repeated by Heinichen in his edition of Eusebius.[4] The Strasburg impression of 1500 (which Smith considered the first) is a reprint, with a few unimportant variations,[5] of that of Eggesteyn, as is also that dated at Hagenau in 1506. All these editions are printed in black letter, in small folio, and are given as a sequel to the translation, by Ruffinus, of the "Ecclesiastical History" of Eusebius. The first critical revision of the text is found in the Antwerp edition of 1550, in the formation of which good manuscripts were employed; the conclusion of chapter xxiv. of book v., which had hitherto been wanting, was now supplied, and the chronological epitome appended to the work was extended to A.D. 767. (See § 91.) This became the basis of the editions of Louvaine, 1566; Basle, 1563; Cologne, 1601, 1612, and 1688; none of which deserve particular notice. It is also included in the collection issued by Commeline, at Heidelberg, in 1587, where the text is revised by a good manuscript, which belonged to Pithou.

§ 64. It was not until the year 1643 that an edition of the "Historia Ecclesiastica" appeared in England; it was then published by Abraham Wheloc, professor of the Arabic and Anglo-Saxon languages in the university of Cambridge. He added to it the Anglo-Saxon version by King Alfred, and a large body of notes, which, however, are rather theological than historical. The Latin text, according to Hardy, seems to have been taken from the Cologne edition of 1612, collated with the Cotton MS. Tiber. C. ii. (see § 68), with a manuscript now in the Library of Trinity College (R. 5. 27), of the twelfth century, and with another belonging to Dr. Ward, Master of Sidney Sussex College (marked Δ 5. 17), of

[1] Petrie and Hardy attribute it to the press of Conrad Fyner, at Eslingen, between 1471 and 1475.

[2] Lord Spencer's copy, the first known in England, cost him forty guineas. This was for some time considered unique; but a more extended search upon the continent has brought several other copies to light; still, however, the book is a scarce one. In 1835 Mr. Heber's sold for 45*l.* In Payne and Foss's catalogue of the same year, (No. 361,) is a copy marked at 16*l.* 16*s.*; and it is there attributed to the press of Eggesteyn, and supposed to have been printed about 1470. Copies are in the British Museum and in the Royal Library at Paris. For all critical purposes the edition is valueless. The proper names are very incorrectly given, and the text ends at the beginning of chapter xxiv. of book v.

[3] In his edition of Eusebius, Præf. p. xxix. ed. Halle, 1779. Petrie and Hardy mention an edition of Spires, in 1490.

[4] Præf. p. xxx. 8vo. Leips. 1827.

[5] These have reference chiefly to the headings of the chapters, and the correction of a few obvious errors of the press.

the end of the fourteenth century. This was succeeded by an edition issued by F. Chifflet (4to. Paris, 1681), founded upon a copy formerly belonging to St. Maximin, at Treves, apparently the same which is now in the possession of Sir Thomas Phillipps. (See § 91.) In its turn this was superseded by the admirable edition of Smith (fol. Cantab. 1722), the text of which, with some modifications, was repeated in the editions issued by the English Historical Society in 1838, by Professor Hussey in 1846, and by Petrie in the first volume of his "Materials for the History of Britain." Since Smith's edition was the first which represented what may now be called the *textus receptus* of the "Historia Ecclesiastica," it becomes necessary that its nature and merits should be stated somewhat in detail.

§ 65. The great value of Smith's edition consists in this—that it is based upon the celebrated manuscript which formerly belonged to More, bishop of Ely, and which is now deposited in the public library at Cambridge (K. k. 5. 16). Appended to this copy of the Ecclesiastical History are certain chronological notes, which exhibit the length of the reigns of various kings of Northumbria, from Ida to Ceolwulf, together with the relative dates of several other incidents. Five of these concur with the year 737, and would thus seem to lead to the inference that this manuscript was transcribed in that year; but there are others which cannot be brought into harmony with this calculation, but which point at the years 734, 738, 741, and 748 respectively. But even admitting the full weight of this difficulty, we may fairly assume that More's copy was transcribed from one which itself had been written in 737, and that the year 748 is the period beyond which we cannot venture to place its date. We thus have the satisfaction of referring to a text which was copied within fifteen years of the death of the venerable Beda.

§ 66. Appended to the Ecclesiastical History, More's manuscript contains a copy of Caedmon's hymn in Anglo-Saxon, the dialectal peculiarities of which are so clearly defined that we have no hesitation in affirming that they are of Northumbrian origin;[1] hence we have an indication not only of the time when, but also of the locality in which, this copy was written. The volume is of a large quarto size, and consists of 128 leaves, copied by at least two scribes, who were employed simultaneously upon the work. Their transcript was carefully revised immediately after its completion, and various errors were then corrected. A specimen of this book is given by Petrie and Hardy (plate xxvi.) Shortly after its transcription it appears to have been carried into France, and to have belonged to some monastery dedicated to St. Julian, which, as has been conjectured, may possibly signify the monastery of St. Julian at Angers, or that at Tours.[2] It continued abroad until the reign of William III, when it was bought at a public auction, and passed into the hands of More, bishop of Ely,[3] who bequeathed it, along

[1] This precious fragment is printed in Wanley's Catalogue, p. 287; Smith's Beda, p. 597; and Thorpe's Caedmon, preface, p. xxii. (see § 74). See also Dr. Latham, "The English Language," p. 546, ed. 1850.

[2] Petrie and Hardy, preface, § 158.

[3] Smith's preface (p. 4).

with his other valuable collections, to the public library of the university of Cambridge.

§ 67. The text from which the present edition is a translation, is Smith's, as re-collated by Petrie. But the following additional manuscript copies have been examined, and occasionally consulted, though for the most part without conferring any very important benefit upon the text as exhibited in the Cambridge manuscript.

§ 68. The Cottonian MS. Tiberius, C. ii, written apparently in the eighth century, in Northumbria. It is a large quarto in double columns, of great beauty and accuracy. A facsimile of its writing is given in the edition published by the English Historical Society, in 1838. It varies in the division of the chapters of the fourth book from the Cambridge MS., omitting chap. xiv. (fol. 104 in the MS.); but in other respects they agree very closely. The numerals have unfortunately been in many cases tampered with by erasure and superscription. The original handwriting ends with the words "certaminis, vel sub quo principe" (not judice), (Smith, 223. 10), which words stand at the bottom of the page, the remainder of the text being inserted in the margin of the leaf by a hand of the twelfth century. The preface[1] ends with the words "mandare studuimus" (Smith, 39. 13).

§ 69. The Cottonian MS. Tiberius, A. xiv, considerably damaged by the fire of 1731, but recently inlaid and rebound. It is of equal antiquity, beauty, and accuracy, with the former; but the prologue, the commencement of the first book, the passages from § 303 to § 340, and from § 427 to the end, are destroyed. It contains chapter xiv of book iv. (fol. 130). The orthography of the proper names is Northumbrian, but in several places the more familar West Saxon forms are superscribed. A facsimile of this MS. is given in the edition of 1838.

§ 70. The Harleian MS. 4978, of foreign execution, probably French, written apparently during the tenth century. It also contains the chapter regarding the miracle of St. Oswald. Prefixed are some obits, from which we obtain an insight into the history of this copy. It belonged to the monastery of St. Mary de Caritate, in the diocese of Auxerre,[2] connected with which, as its cells, were St. Andrew's, Northampton,[3] Wenloc,[4] and Bermondsey,[5] in England. The body of the manuscript was written on the continent; but it seems to have found its way into this country as early as the twelfth century, since one gathering, which had been lost, is supplied by an English scribe at that period. It preserves its Northumbrian orthography. A facsimile of this copy is given by Petrie and Hardy, plate xxvii.

[1] Smith's description of this copy is calculated to mislead the inquirer in two particulars, which, though apparently unimportant in themselves, considerably affect any attempt at a classification of the manuscripts of the "Historia Ecclesiastica." He states that there is in this manuscript a blank for the remainder of the preface; there is no such blank. He speaks of the passage beginning with the words "Præterea omnes," as if they were by the first hand, whereas they are in a hand of the twelfth century. The same remarks apply in reference to the words "Hic deest folium" (Smith, p. 157, note).

[2] Gallia Christ. xii. 403.

[3] Monast. Anglic. i. 679.

[4] Ibid. 613.

[5] Ibid. 639.

§ 71. The Hatton MS. 43 (formerly 81), now in the Bodleian Library, of the tenth century, apparently written at, or for, the monastery of Glastonbury (see fol. 2). It terminated its preface originally with the words "mandare studuimus;" but a hand of the twelfth century has appended our § 3. The book ends with the words "intercessionis inveniam." The orthography was originally Northumbrian (copied doubtless from an Anglian prototype); but it has been altered to the Western Saxon by erasure and superscription. It does not recognise the history of Oswald.

§ 72. The Bodley MS. 163, (formerly N. E. B. iv. 10, or 2016), a fine copy of the eleventh century, in quarto. The prologue ends with the words "mandare studuimus," and the book, "intercessionis inveniam." The history of St. Oswald occurs, and is divided into eight lessons. The proper names retain their primitive forms.

§ 73. The Royal MS. 13 C. v., in the British Museum, written in the eleventh century, and formerly belonging to St. Peter's, Gloucester. It also contains book iv., chap. xiv. The preface ends with the words "mandare studuimus." A single leaf has been cut out from the end of the volume. The proper names are reduced to the West Saxon dialect.

§ 74. The Laud MS. 243 (formerly H. 38), in the Bodleian Library, once the property of Archbishop Ussher. This copy is of the twelfth century, and is imperfect both at beginning and end, all being wanting before the list of chapters prefixed to the first book, and after the words "Teque deprecor" (§ 456). It appears to have been written for some monastery dedicated to St. Oswald,[1] whose history it contains, converting the passage into a Lectionary, (like Bodley MS. 163, see § 72,) and in other instances[2] directing attention to that individual. The Northumbrian forms are retained in the proper names. Considerable interest attaches to this MS. from the fact of it containing a copy of the fragment of Caedmon,[3] similar in extent to that which occurs in More's MS., but modernized.

§ 75. The Harleian MS. 4124, a folio volume of the twelfth century, formerly belonging to Rawlinson, and, at the time of its suppression, to the monastery of Wirksop. It omits chap. xiv. of book iv. The preface ends with the words "mandare studuimus;" the rest is added at the end of the history.

§ 76. The Digby MS. 211, in the Bodleian Library, a folio

[1] Possibly Nostel, in Yorkshire, Monast. Angl. ii. 33.

[2] See fol. 41 b, 42, and 50.

[3] See § 66. For the benefit of those who are interested in the history of our language, the editor subjoins these lines, that they may be compared with the copy contained in the Cambridge MS.

Nu þe sceolon herian
heofonrices peard
Metudes mihte
ȝ his mod-geþanc
þeore-pulder fæder
ȝpa he pundra gehpæs
ece drihten
þa he ærest sceop
eorðe-bearnum

heofon to hrofe
þa middan-geard
moncynnes peard
ece drihten
æfter teode
fyrum on folden
frea ælmihtig
halig scyp.....—Fol. 82, b.

volume of the twelfth century, formerly belonging to the church of the Holy Cross at Waltham. It contains the account of Oswald's miracles. The preface ends with the words "mandare studuimus." The proper names are reduced to the West Saxon orthography.

§ 77. The Fairfax MS. 12, in the Bodleian Library, a folio of the twelfth century, formerly belonging to the monastery of St. German at Selby. It passed through the hands of "W. Santclair of Roislin, knecht, anno 1591, 2 Jan.," and came into the possession of "W. Fairfax, 1650, mense Septembri, ex dono magistri Walteri Cant, civitate Edensi advocati." The preface ends with the words "mandare studuimus." It contains the passage about Oswald.

§ 78. The Laud MS. 78 (formerly F. 68), a folio manuscript, written about the year 1163, for some monastery of the Cistercian order.[1]

§ 79. The Harleian MS. 3680, a manuscript of the thirteenth century, formerly belonging to Hubert, precentor of Rochester, and by him given to the cloister of that church. It contains chap. xiv. of book iv. The preface ends with "intercessionis inveniam."

§ 80. The Durham MS. B. ii. 35, written about the year 1166. The preface ends with the words "mandare studuimus." Its earlier readings have frequently been altered by erasure and superscription, and its text is by no means correct.

§ 81. The Additional MS. 14,250, in the British Museum, a folio MS. of the thirteenth century,[2] formerly belonging to the monastery of Plympton. The preface ends with the words "mandare studuimus," and it contains the history of Oswald; it retains nothing of its original Northumbrian orthography in the proper names.

§ 82. The Barlow MS. 39, in the Bodleian library, of the thirteenth or fourteenth century; it is mutilated at the beginning, having lost all before chap. xviii. book i. § 42. The history ends with the words "intercessionis inveniam." Its proper names are reduced to the West Saxon standard.

§ 83. The Royal MS. 13, B. xviii. in the British Museum, written during the reign of king Henry III. The preface ends with the words "intercessionis inveniam," and it omits the § 456. It retains the Northumbrian peculiarities of spelling.

§ 84. The Bodleian MS. 712, (formerly known as Sup. Art. D. 20, or Arch F. 20,) a fine volume in folio, written about the year 1320, for Robert de Wiville, bishop of Salisbury. The prologue ends with the words "mandare studuimus," § 3 forming the conclusion of the history. The proper names are Saxonized throughout.

§ 85. The Digby MS. 101, in the Bodleian Library, a quarto MS. of the fourteenth century, written apparently (judging from a few marginal notes) in the diocese of Ely. It contains the history of St. Oswald. The arrangement of the preface corresponds with the copy last described. All trace of Northumbrianism in the proper names has vanished.

§ 86. The Bodley MS. 302, (formerly NE. C. iv. 3, or 2086,

[1] See ff. 101 b, 103 b.

[2] Purchased at the sale of Dean Milles's library, 15th April, 1843, (lot 1168.)

or E. v. 7,) a copy written in the fourteenth century.[1] The preface is similar in its arrangement to the last copy, and the same remark may be made in reference to its spelling.

§ 87. The Burney MS. 310, in the British Museum, written by William, called "du Stiphel," for Uctred, monk of Durham, at Finchale, and finished 28 August, 1381.[2] The preface ends with the words "mandare studuimus," and the book, "intercessionis inveniam." Apparently a transcript of the Durham MS. B. ii. 35 (see § 80).

§ 88. The Arundel MS. 74, in the British Museum, a folio of the fifteenth century. The § 3 is repeated as well at the end of the preface as at the conclusion of the whole history. Its orthography is West Saxon.

§ 89. The Royal MS. 13. C. vii. (fol. 19), in the British Museum, a copy of the fifteenth century. The § 3 is thrown to the end of the whole work.

§ 90. The Additional MS. 10,949, in the British Museum, a late but valuable copy, upon paper, transcribed towards the middle of the fifteenth century, in Germany, but from a manuscript of considerable authority. The preface includes § 3, and the whole history ends with § 456. The proper names retain their Northumbrian form, though they are not always correctly copied by the scribe. The chronological abstract reaches the year 766, this being the only copy in the British Museum which contains that summary.

§ 91. Besides these manuscripts, all of which have been examined by the editor, there are others to which reference may be made upon the present occasion; namely, at Oxford, in the collection of the late Mr. Douce, and in the libraries of Baliol, Merton, New College, Lincoln, All Souls, Magdalen, and St. John's; concerning which Coxe's catalogues of these colleges may be consulted. Also at Cambridge, in the libraries of Emmanuel (18); Trinity (257, 282, 521); Sidney (8 K 11, and K 5. 15). The collection of Sir Thomas Phillipps contains at least four copies, one of the ninth or tenth century, one of the eleventh, (see § 64,) one of the twelfth, and one of the fourteenth, to which last two Petrie refers on account of their having a continuation of the concluding epitome, from A.D. 733 to A.D. 766. They are the only copies of the kind which occurred to him, (but see § 90,) and he thinks that the latter of the two was probably used for the Antwerp edition of 1550. (See § 63.)

§ 92. There are several MSS. of the "Historia Ecclesiastica" in foreign libraries, which are of considerable antiquity, and of which a collation would be desirable. The copy at St. Gall, mentioned (at § 35, note 3), is said to be nearly as old as the Cambridge MS.; a specimen from one of the ninth century is engraved in Walther's Lexicon Diplomaticum;[3] and another, of the tenth century, is described by Mone.[4] The Royal Library at Paris contains thirteen manuscripts, of different ages.[5]

[1] Written apparently about 1356. See fol. 137 b.
[2] See fol. 178 b; and concerning this Uctred, see Tanner's Bibliotheca, p. 743.
[3] Plate IV. fol. Gotting. 1745.
[4] Quellen und Forschungen, p. 443, ed. 8vo. Leipz. 1830.
[5] From the variations which have been pointed out in the above list as existing

§ 93. The text being settled upon these authorities, a few remarks upon the translation here given become necessary. It is based upon the publication of which the following is the title :— "The Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation, from the coming of Julius Cæsar into this Island, in the sixtieth year before the Incarnation of Christ, till the year of our Lord 731; written in Latin by Venerable Bede, and now translated into English from Dr. Smith's Edition."[1] This translation is usually attributed to Stevens, better known by his English version of Dugdale's Monasticon; but upon what authority it is so ascribed to him is uncertain. It is painful to be compelled to state that the title-page asserts what is not the truth, as to the original text from which the translation is made; for it varies in so many and such important respects from Smith's text, as to prove that it was not derived from that edition. The fact would seem to be this,—that the translator, whoever he was, having completed his task shortly before the publication of Smith's edition (which was issued in 1722), took advantage of the interest occasioned by that work, and unscrupulously introduced the name of its most respectable editor upon his own title-page. Stevens's rendering is far from satisfactory: sometimes it is too lax; sometimes it is close even to obscurity; sometimes it fails altogether in representing the meaning of the author; and many of these imperfections have been suffered to remain uncorrected in the subsequent reprints of it which have appeared. It became necessary, therefore, that the whole work should undergo a strict revision; and this having been done, it is now presented to the reader in the belief that it lays before the English public the most accurate, and, at the same time, the most readable translation of "The Ecclesiastical History of the Venerable Beda" which has yet appeared in our language.

§ 94. Of the notes, the editor must speak with diffidence. They embody all that appeared to him to be really valuable in the excellent annotations[2] of Smith, together with such additional information as had escaped the notice of that accomplished scholar, or had been brought to light by the researches of inquirers during the last century. In a publication like the present, discussion or lengthened inquiry are inadmissible: the reader is requested, therefore, to bear in mind that the remarks of the present editor are in most cases suggestive rather than illustrative, and that in not a few

among the copies here described, it would appear that there have been two editions or recensions of the Historia Ecclesiastica, not, indeed, varying from each other in any very important respects, yet marked by a line of separation sufficiently distinct to warrant the conclusion which the editor has ventured to express. There is also a third class or family of eclectic copies, which fluctuate between the two, the scribes of which attempted to blend together the peculiarities of each separate recension; these of course must be excluded from any classification of the texts.

[1] 8vo. Lond. 1723.

[2] Several of these notes are transcribed from archbishop Ussher's "Britannicarum Ecclesiarum Antiquitates," (fol. Lond. 1687,) and many of the others were written by Gale, who had made extensive preparations for a new edition of the "Historia Ecclesiastica" (which are preserved, among his other manuscripts, in Trinity College, Cambridge, O. ii. 63, 64); but enough remain to show the learning, judgment, and industry of the two Smiths.

instances he has been constrained to satisfy himself with indicating the sources from which additional information may be gained.

§ 95. We now pass to the consideration of Beda's minor historical works; and the first which claims our notice is the Life of St. Cuthbert.

Beda himself informs us, in the list of his writings appended to his Ecclesiastical History, that he had twice employed his pen in recording the biography of this individual; once in verse, and once in prose. We do not print the former of these narratives, because it is entirely superseded by the latter, which not only embodies in an extended form all the incidents which are to be found in the Metrical Life, but introduces much supplemental information. The short preface to the metrical life, which has all the characteristics of a private letter, will be found, along with Beda's correspondence, in another volume.

§ 96. The prose life of Cuthbert, the later and more important of the two legends, is dedicated to Eadfrid, bishop of Holy Island, and the monks there resident; a fact which of itself would have been a sufficient security for the general accuracy of the narrative. The historian, anxious apparently to bear no further responsibility than that which fairly devolved upon him as the exponent of information which he had received upon credible testimony, takes care to record the authorities upon which his work is founded, and the successive examinations to which it had been subjected. Having formed his narrative upon the information of those who had the best means of knowing the truth of what they stated, the unpublished work was submitted as well to the inspection of one who had attended Cuthbert during his last illness, as of others equally well informed respecting the incidents of his life; and corrections and additions were made in accordance with their suggestions. A fair copy of the legend was then sent to Lindisfarne, and during two days it underwent a rigid scrutiny by the oldest and most judicious brethren of that monastery. When it had obtained their final sanction, and had been augmented by the addition of certain supplemental insertions, for which they were the vouchers, the work was declared to be worthy of circulation, and was accordingly handed over to the transcribers.

§ 97. After so much precaution employed by men who had such favourable opportunities of knowing the truth, we may feel assured that we are here put in possession of an authentic account of the principal facts in the life of this early bishop of Lindisfarne. Our faith in its historical veracity is increased by observing a fact of which Beda himself has not informed us, namely, that it is founded upon, and in many parts transcribed from, an earlier life of Cuthbert, a translation of which will be given in its proper course.

§ 98. We are not able to decide with any accuracy as to the precise time when this legend was composed; but as it is dedicated to Eadfrid, it cannot be referred to a later date than A.D. 721, in which year that individual died.

The text from which the translation is given is founded upon Smith's text collated with the following manuscripts:—

The Harleian MS. 1117, a volume written at latest in the tenth century, in a rough and bold hand. At the end are four Latin lines,[1] stating that the volume had been written by the command of a certain abbot, named Wigbeorht, and probably presented by him to the church over which he presided.

§ 99. The Cottonian MS. Vitell. A. xix., a manuscript of the tenth century, elegantly and correctly written.

The Digby MS. 59, in the Bodleian Library, of the twelfth century.

The Bodley MS. 109, (formerly NE. B. i. 20, and 1692,) of the eleventh century; a valuable copy, but imperfect, the scribe having ceased his labours in the middle of a page, with the words "memento, frater Hereberete, ut modo," (ch. xxviii. p. 105, ed. E. H. S.) and more than one copyist has been employed upon the portion previously transcribed.

The Bodley MS. 596, (formerly NE. F. iii. 9,) of the twelfth century, originally belonging to the monastery of St. Augustine, Canterbury. This copy also is slightly imperfect, ending with the words, "tabulis minus diligenter," (ch. xlvi. p. 135, ed. E. H. S.)

The Fell MS. 1, (fol. 57,) in the Bodleian Library, of the twelfth century.

The Fairfax MS. 6, in the Bodleian Library. This, though a late copy, being of the fourteenth century, is of importance as having formerly belonged to the monastery of St. Cuthbert at Durham.

It may be sufficient to state, in general terms, that the variations afforded by these copies are neither numerous nor important.

§ 100. The lives of the abbots of the monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow next follow. This interesting narrative furnishes us with an account of the foundation of that ecclesiastical establishment in which Beda had been nurtured, and whose history he here traces onwards from that period to his own time. The greater part of the events here recorded must have passed under his own immediate observation, or have been derived from the information of the actors themselves; hence perhaps it is that he is less explicit than elsewhere in pointing out the sources of his information. Yet we find that this treatise is based upon one of an earlier date, a translation of which will be given in its due place.

§ 101. In addition to its historical value, this piece of biography is of importance in another respect; for it places before us, more clearly than any of his other writings, an exemplification of Beda's own mode of dealing with a narrative of events. We here find him unfettered by authority to which he thought it incumbent upon him to defer, as in the case of the Life of St. Cuthbert, where the

[1] "Jusserat ecclesiæ Uuigbeorhtus scribere nabla hoc
Abbas hujus, cunctos rogitat qui hic psallere captant,
Utque sui memores cantus cumulamine constent,
Quo Deus omnipotens sibi crimina cuncta relaxet."

The word "nabla," or "nablum," signifies a psaltery or psalter, see Bedæ Opera, viii. 1061, ed. Basil. 1563. It seems probable, therefore, that these lines, written originally in a copy of the Psalms, were transcribed into this manuscript without reference to its subject-matter.

bishop and the elder brethren of Lindisfarne forced upon him statements, which, had he been left to the exercise of his own free judgment, he would possibly have rejected. The same remark applies, in a great measure, to the Ecclesiastical History. In his preparation for that work his numerous correspondents furnished him with materials of various degrees of accuracy; but as he had no means of testing their truth severally, he accepted and inserted all. But in the instance now before us he is under no such disadvantage; and the result is, that he has produced a work which warrants us in forming a higher opinion of his qualifications as an historian than we should be inclined to do were we deprived of the insight which it gives us into the tone and bent of his mind. We may hence infer that had he been more favourably circumstanced,—had he, for instance, been less dependent for his facts than he was upon the information furnished by others, men less critical, perhaps less truth-loving than himself,—had he been enabled to write with the same precision upon other matters as upon the history of his own monastery, his great work, the Ecclesiastical History, would have been even more valuable than it is, and would have presented fewer of those narratives which detract so materially from its acknowledged merits and general credibility.

§ 102. This piece of biography was first printed by Sir James Ware, (8vo. Dublin, 1664,) and reprinted by Henry Wharton, (4to. Lond. 1693,) both editors using a single Cottonian manuscript. Smith complained of the great incorrectness of this text, and corrected it by three copies: one at Durham, one at Pembroke College, Cambridge, and one at Merton College, Oxford. From this text, collated with the Harleian MS. 4124, fol. 87 b. of the twelfth century (which, however, ends imperfectly with the words "crucem qua"—Smith, 297, 16,) and the Fairfax MS. vi. fol. 174, (see § 99,) the present translation is made. No important results were gained by this collation.

§ 103. The Sermon upon the nativity of Benedict Biscop, pronounced in the monastery of Wearmouth (or Jarrow) upon the day of his commemoration, is printed from the Harleian MS. 3020, collated with the text, which is to be found in the Basle edition of Beda's works, (vii. 462.) The information which it contains is scanty, and it adds no new facts to what Beda had already written respecting his master Benedict; but it is here inserted in order to complete the series of his historical writings upon the subject of the monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow.

§ 104. The Chronicle of Beda, or his treatise upon the Six Ages of this World, being a general summary of history from the creation to the year 729, necessarily contains a considerable portion of matter in no way connected with English history. It has been thought expedient therefore, in the present instance, to depart from the authority of Smith, who printed the whole of the Six Ages; and, like the edition published by the English Historical Society, to limit our extract to the sixth age, which commences with the Christian era; prefixing, however, the general summary of the

contents of the passages so omitted. The text adopted by Smith was founded upon four manuscripts; one in the Bodleian Library, (N. E. F. iii. 5;) one belonging to Magdalen College, Oxford; a third in the Royal Library, then at Westminster, and now in the British Museum; and a fourth in St. John's College, Cambridge. Petrie has adopted this text, collating it with two copies of the eleventh century, belonging to Sir Thomas Phillipps. An examination of Smith's edition with the Royal MSS. 13 A. xi. fol. 89, 12 D. iv. fol. 79, and 12 F. ii., all of the twelfth century, shows its general accuracy, and warrants its adoption as the basis of the present translation.

§ 105. The Epistle to Ecgberct, abounding with curious notices illustrating the state of monachism in England, as it existed when Beda wrote, is given from Smith's text, the present editor not having had the opportunity of collating it with any manuscript copy.

J. S.

Vicarage, Leighton Buzzard,
20*th April*, 1853.

THE

# LIFE OF THE VENERABLE BEDA.[1]

## BY AN UNKNOWN WRITER, OF GREAT ANTIQUITY.

### The Prologue.

§ 1. Among the Catholic Expositors of Holy Scripture who have shone forth as lights of the world next after the Apostles, Beda, a presbyter, versed in biblical learning, and a monk of exemplary life, holds a name and place of distinguished honour. And justly doth the holy church admit him into the number of those doctors, whose diligence of application in the study of the holy Scriptures the true Israelite sets before him as an example, by which he is encouraged both in his contemplations and in his writings, to consecrate the greater part of his sacred functions to the defence and ornament of the house of God. For he has published many volumes in explanation of holy Writ, which are seasoned with apostolic salt; and these being founded upon the rock of steadfast faith, cannot be shaken by all the violence of the gates of hell. The name of this person, indeed, previous to his decease, seeing that he resided out of the world, in an island of the ocean, was veiled in obscurity; but after his death, when God, as the Scripture saith, brought the clouds from the ends of the earth, wheresoever the voice of the apostles has reached, he lives, by his works, in the memory of believers; and as a candle set upon the candlestick of the church, he gives light to all that are in the house of God, that, through the grace of God cooperating with his writings, he might illuminate the church, his mother, who by regenerating him in Christ Jesus, had illuminated him. So that while he takes his seat on high, on the score of his learning, along with the most eminent men of the churches, and occupies amongst them a glorious throne, everywhere speaking aloud with them, and lifting up the voice of the gospel like a trumpet, even then the vast renown of a person so illustrious might seem to be obscured by a cloud of depression, if his origin, or his character, or his life, or the end of his life, should pass the ears of the church unheard, like something unprofitable, or even ignoble, which had better not be told. Far be the breath of such a suspicion from that vessel of election and instrument of the Holy Spirit; for, as faith is strengthened by knowledge, so by the example of his life (provided it be made known) the love of faith shall yet be the more ardently inflamed. Planted from his very cradle in the house of the Lord, through the influence of grace he put forth the blossoms of righteousness, like an expanding palm-tree, daily setting forth the mercy and faithfulness of God on a psaltery of ten strings, joining with the anthem of words, the harp of

[1] It is not easy to decide when or where this life of Beda was written; but there seems reason to believe that it is the production of an author who lived on the south of the river Humber, and who wrote before Beda's remains were translated at Durham in 1104, (see Preface, § 42.) no allusion being made to this circumstance. The information which it furnishes is of little value, for it only retails, in inflated language, the particulars mentioned by Beda regarding himself and the monastic establishment with which he was connected. Yet it seemed to merit a place in our collection as the earliest of the various lives of Beda with which we are acquainted. It is here translated from Smith's text, (p. 815,) collated with MS. Harl. 526, fol. 28; Harl. 367, fol. 76; Harl. 4124, fol. 82b; MS. Cott. Nero, E. 1, fol. 394; all of the twelfth century; and MS. Harl. 322, fol. 153, of the thirteenth century. Some of these copies omit the prologue; in other respects the variations are unimportant.

good works. For, brought up among saints, and by saints, under monastic discipline, and imbued with polite literature, holy with the holy, and innocent with the innocent, he trod the path of life, and aimed with all his might to keep himself unspotted from the world.

§ 2. In testimony of the certain truth of these assertions, we have laid together, in our description of a perfect man in Christ, both what he himself as well as others have written concerning him; for we have drawn our facts from various sources, like the different parts of the members compacted into one body. For the series of recorded facts, which, by being interrupted here and there in the works of various writers, had deprived the reader of an acquaintance with this remarkable man; by being linked together, as the order of the incidents requires, more vividly depicts his character by the force of a composition lucidly arranged. And assuredly the difficulty of this task, which even the unflinching diligence of able writers will readily acknowledge, far exceeds our abilities, who have nothing to boast of either in eloquence or learning. But as all things are possible to him that believeth, we will not shrink from the word, who believe in the Word, I mean in Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God; and that we may be thought worthy to have Him for the beginning and end of our work and discourse, may his mercy vouchsafe to prevent with its inspiration, and to further with its help all, that we shall do and say.

## Here begins the Life of the Venerable Beda, Presbyter, and Monk of Jarrow.

### BOOK I.

§ 3. Jesus Christ, the author of man's salvation, was sending forth his labourers into the harvest of that multitude, which would give ear to their holy preaching; and the grace of the gospel was already shining upon every creature throughout the whole world, when the province of Northumberland also, though far removed to the very outskirts of the globe, became a partaker of divine knowledge, and even in the frozen region of the north it glowed with the Saviour's holy fire. For the Lord came to send upon earth the fire of his Holy Spirit; and because no one can hide himself from the heat thereof, it darts into remotest nations, and enkindles the flames of its love in the hearts of men, that, departing from the old life, they may become a new creature in Christ. And, at length, when faith had supplanted infidelity, which, as the Scripture testifieth, hath its dwelling in the apostate north, [Ezek. xxxii. 30,] even there was founded the city of the great King, which, rejoicing with exultation, proclaims, to the whole world, in praise of its Founder, "Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised in the city of our God." [Ps. xlviii. 1.] For, to begin with the rulers—the very kings of that province, as soon as they acknowledged their Creator, held their crowns the more securely, by how much the more devotedly they rejoiced in being the subjects of Christ, the King eternal; and the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem which was to come became the servants of Babylon by bearing, by a constrained service, the burdens of public government. Witness the fervency of king Edwin, and his pious regard for religion. Witness, too, Oswald's invincible constancy in the faith, who, while he gloried in nothing but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by that cross triumphed over the foes of the holy cross; and by devoting his treasures to the support of the needy, entered heaven adorned with the double crown of charity and martyrdom. In his brother Oswy was kindled the zeal of God's house, insomuch that those tares, which the enemy had sown among the good seeds of the gospel by means of heretics and schismatics, he cut away with the sickle of catholic truth, and pulling them up by the roots, wholly cast them out of his kingdom. I pass over the labours of his son Ecgfrid; I pass over his wisdom and goodness exhibited in founding monasteries in various parts of his kingdom. Authentic records attest that he was a man of eminent piety, and beloved of God. To omit other things, this alone raises him to the highest pinnacle

of fame, that he caused that excellent man, of angelic life, St. Cuthbert, to be elevated to the episcopate.

§ 4. I may say that the condition of that province was then happy, and indeed blessed, to which the holiness of life and the learning of Christ's priests, and of those who held high stations in the church, were at once an ornament and a defence. For, to pass over those prelates of distinguished sanctity whom that province enjoyed before, or subsequently, it was blessed with glorious fathers of its illumination and salvation, I mean Wilfrid, Eata, Cuthbert, John, who were contemporaries, and illustrious bishops of incomparable merit. Under those double rulers of church and state, while a zeal for religion daily gathered strength, churches and monasteries were everywhere freely erected, in which the future citizens of the holy places and the servants of God being united together, that they might live spiritually in the flesh, denying themselves and all that belonged to them, carried their Saviour's cross in their conversation, and wholly consumed themselves in the flames of heavenly love, as a burnt-offering of a sweet savour unto the Lord.

§ 5. Among those sworn soldiers of Christ, who fought against the world and the prince of the world, one of the most eminent for his distinguished acts in Christ was abbot Benedict, having received from the Lord the grace of benediction which is implied in his name; for, in order that when he should be ready to enter into the joy of his Lord, he might increase the number of the talents that had been committed to him, he founded two monasteries, which, nevertheless, by the indissoluble bond of peace and love, were made one: of these he caused one to be constructed at the mouth of the Wear, in honour of Peter, the blessed chief of the apostles; the other at Jarrow, in honour of Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles. It is needless to add more. After the example of holy Abraham, many of the sons of God that had been dispersed abroad, quitting the world and all connexion with the old and worldly life, there met together, and with a view to the erection of the tower of evangelical perfection by holiness of life, voluntarily renouncing all they had, followed, as paupers, a penniless Christ. And thus a numerous and noble swarm of monks speedily united together as soon as it had experienced the delightful charm of that happy brotherhood of which the psalmist speaks, "How good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to live together in unity!" [Ps. cxxxiii. 1.]

§ 6. Moreover, the pious care of parents commended their hopeful offspring to Benedict, to be by him brought up for God, that being trained by holy discipline, they might forget their people, and their father's house: and that thus, while in tender age they were presented as a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing unto God, they might begin to serve the Spirit before they could know the things that pertain to flesh and blood. Of these, one little child, nay, the only one, in comparison with the rest, of a virtuous disposition, was, while yet in his seventh year, carried by his parents to the monastery, and committed to the aforesaid holy person, to be specially qualified for the holy ministry. For he was a native of an inconsiderable village in the territory of Jarrow, past which sweeps the deep river Tyne, which falls into the ocean at no great distance.

§ 7. The year of his birth, as we gather from chronological computation, is found to be the 677th year of the Incarnate Word; which was the seventh year of the reign of Egfrid, king of the nation of Transhumbria, and the fourth from the commencement of the aforesaid monastery of St. Peter. And here at first, but afterwards in the monastery of the apostle Paul, his infant age was trained under the curb of discipline; and after the example of blessed Samuel, who was of old "lent unto the Lord," the child of God abode in the temple, that he might afterwards declare to the people the secrets of God's word, which had been told to him in the ear of his heart. But though at that period of life little or no advantage might be expected from his literary studies, yet even at that age, through the blessing of God, sparks of singular intelligence discovered themselves, from the force of natural genius. But as soon as he had acquired a knowledge of the liberal arts, and had cultivated his understanding by habituating it to the grasp of loftier subjects, he likewise set himself to pierce into the

mysteries of the holy Scriptures, and upon their investigation he expended all his powers with untiring energy, adding prayers to the prayer of the psalmist, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of thy law." [Ps. cxix. 18.] And as he asked in faith, nothing doubting, there was bestowed upon him by the Father of lights that best gift and perfect gift of wisdom; but not the wisdom of this world, which cometh to nought, but that wisdom of God which the apostle declares to be hid in mysteries. For he received, for the furtherance of his work of continual meditation in the law of the Lord, a wakeful eye, endowed with amazing perspicacity; to which, along with stores of religious books, there was joined the careful and uninterrupted instruction of masters, distinguished for their ecclesiastical learning. And thus were the earlier years of this memorable person cultivated by those who had planted and watered in hope of good fruit; and, while God gave the increase, a fruitful olive-tree is preparing in the house of God, that is, the church.

§ 8. But all this, perhaps, some incredulous people will scarcely believe, since, as even the author of secular eloquence affirms, Everybody readily assents to what he thinks he can easily perform; but regards as fiction all that exceeds it. For who will not stand amazed, or even consider it as beyond belief, that such spiritual gifts should abound even to overflowing in a remote corner of the world; that there the holy Scriptures were not only read, but their mysteries explained, and thence diffused throughout the length and breadth of the globe! where, if the name of Christ had never been heard, certainly it would have been no wonder; whither, to speak poetically,—

"Boreas comes with drooping wing."

But hence piety lends strength to tottering faith, which declares that the majesty of the Omnipotent Spirit is extended by no amplitude of space, is limited by no boundaries, but is everywhere present to all; whose Almighty power bestows the grace of its inspiration where it pleases. "Whither," says he, "shall I go from thy Spirit, and whither shall I flee from thy presence?" [Ps. cxxxix. 7.

§ 9. I will briefly relate, then, by whose ministry the breath of the Holy Spirit breathed the riches of his mercy upon these remote shores of the ocean, so that where they had known nothing else than to speak like barbarians, there those that searched into the wondrous testimonies of the Lord, pronounced with their lips all the judgments of God's mouth. That man of venerable life whom I mentioned above, Benedict by grace and name, while he was making several visits to Rome (for he made five journeys thither, for the sake of the monastery), carried back thence, besides many ornaments which he had brought for the beautifying of the house of God, a vast collection of books, as is reported, of every sort. For whatever, in the way of ecclesiastical utility or decoration, could not be had in England, that France or Rome either had voluntarily presented to the pious merchantman, by his friends, or offered it to him for purchase at an easy price. Besides, he experienced the liberal munificence of those glorious pontiffs of the apostolic see, Vitalian, and afterwards Agatho, towards the protection of the monastery which he had built, and towards the magnificence of the public worship of the church. And he likewise, at the command of pope Vitalian, brought to England archbishop Theodore, and his colleague, abbot Hadrian, truly apostolic men, and very fit ministers of the word of God, seeing that they were well versed in the knowledge both of secular and ecclesiastical philosophy, and that, too, in both languages—Greek and Latin. Who, having traversed the whole island, wheresoever the race of the Angles inhabited, and having collected crowds of disciples, daily poured forth the streams of saving knowledge for the watering of their hearts; so that, besides the volumes of holy writ, they imparted to their hearers the knowledge of poetry, astronomy, and ecclesiastical arithmetic. And such as desired instruction in holy learning had masters at hand to teach them. And as a proof of this it may be observed, that many of their disciples survived them, who were as well acquainted with the Greek and Latin languages as with their mother tongue.

§ 10. I have thought it necessary to say thus much, lest in the remote corners of the world, his intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures should appear incredible in our theologian, Beda, for whose education the providence of God's superintendence had provided an ample store of sacred books, and the assiduous care of distinguished teachers in every science. For, at the very time when, through the light that was shed upon the church of England by the forementioned doctors and their disciples after them, the study of both [secular and ecclesiastical] literature was flourishing, this docile youth, penetrated with a love of the sciences, devoted himself with heart and soul to the same study. And by the time that he had acquired a knowledge of Latin, equal to that which he had of his vernacular tongue, he attained likewise no slight acquaintance with Greek. Besides, both he and the church of the apostles with which he was connected, had for an instructor, both in reading and singing, abbot John, archchanter of the holy Roman church, who had been sent for that very purpose by pope Agatho, at the request of Benedict, who had brought him thither. He also tells us himself that he had for his instructor in the holy Scriptures, a monk named Tunbert, who had been educated under the care of bishop Ceadda, a truly pious man, and well versed in the Bible. He had many other guides in the path of the Scriptures, for he was one who, while living among six hundred fellow-soldiers in the holy monastic warfare, (for this was the number that the forementioned monastery of the apostles Peter and Paul contained,) emulated the better gifts of each; insomuch that, whatever spiritual wisdom each of them had acquired, he, by hard study, drank the whole from all of them, so that he was satiated with the plentifulness of God's house, and of the river of his pleasure the Lord gave him to drink. And thus this eminently wise bee of the church, thirsting for that sweetness that is grateful to God, gathered flowers all over the field that the Lord had blessed, with which making honey, as it were, by the alchemy of wisdom, he indited compositions that are sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. While he was thus burning after the study of divine philosophy, with the increase of years, grew also the grace of spiritual gifts; so that, along with the spirit of wisdom and understanding, he received also the spirit of the fear of the Lord, by which he kept under his body and brought it into subjection, and learnt, like the apostle, to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.

§ 11. And now, when he was in his nineteenth year, this holy Levite was chosen, as it were, from the rest of the tribes to minister in sacred things: that serving at the altar of the Lord, he might have our Lord, with the true Levites of the true sanctuary, for the lot and portion of his inheritance, which, earnestly longing for, with the psalmist, with sighs, he cried out, as he sighed, and said, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, my hope and my portion in the land of the living." [Ps. xvi. 5.] Wherefore, as a deacon, he solemnly read the gospel, and in order that he might conform to his evangelical lessons, he framed his life by evangelical precepts, having the loins of his mind girt up, and his feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. And now, being thirty years of age, this blessed person was applying himself vigorously to the study of a contemplative life, when, lo! he is advanced a step higher at the holy altar, where, with the sacrifice of a troubled spirit and a contrite heart, the Son is daily offered up to the Father as an offering of peace and reconciliation. From which time, that is to say, from the period when he took upon him the order of presbyter, he devoted the whole of his acute intellect to the exposition of the holy Scriptures; and in the composition of many books of catholic erudition, whatever this clean animal had, up to this time, ruminated, either by learning, reading, or meditation, he brought it all up for holy use by writing and teaching. His expanding mind daily advanced in mystic lore to such a degree, that, through the direction of divine grace, to most of the very persons whom he had had for his guides in the paths of the Scripture, he himself, now more skilful than they, became a guide through the fathomless depths of deeper knowledge. Having thus laid open the inner mysteries, he gazed, with the eye of a clean heart, upon the Holy of Holies, while He, in whom are hidden all the

treasures of wisdom and knowledge, manifested to him the dark and hidden things of his wisdom, in order that what he had learnt in darkness, he might preach in the light, and what he had heard in the ear, he might declare from the church tops. [Luke xii. 3.] Whose fiery word, as the psalmist says, [Ps. cxix. 140,] he sought earnestly, because sublimely, to understand; and so he drew near, as it were, to that flaming mount, in which the law was written with the finger of God, where, while he searches into the secret things of the sacraments, he enters with Moses into the cloudy darkness. That brightness of Moses' countenance, upon which, in the understanding of the law, the carnal Israel could not look, our spiritual Israelite, removing the veil of ignorance which is placed upon the heart of unbelievers, freely gazed upon with the eye of the intellect. For where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is intellectual liberty; which, because he saw it in the law of perfect liberty, his speech and doctrine, according to the apostle, was not in the learned words of human wisdom, but in the words of faith, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, so that the deep of the Old Testament called to the deep of the gospel, with the voice of many waters, that is, with the voice of the prophets and apostles.

§ 12. And now, while the grace of God towered so sublimely in him, fame spread the name of this celebrated man in every direction, which poured his eminence in the Scriptures in the ears of the church. There might you see the zeal of the queen of Sheba, who came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, because many thronged together from far to hear, by his interpreter, the wisdom of the true Solomon, that is, of our Peacemaker, who hath made of both one. Some cleaving to him by intimate companionship, heard the master himself; others, who could not personally visit him, addressed him by letter, soliciting his solutions of knotty questions touching chapters in the Bible, and his explanation of obscure ones. He also, at the request of some persons, expounded some entire books of canonical authority, "from head to foot," as they say, treading in the footsteps of the fathers, while he handled the subject in a plainer manner. In this way, among others, he put forth a plain exposition of the Gospel of St. Luke in six books, at the entreaty of the most reverend Acca, bishop of Hexham, whose letter conveying this request begins in these terms:—"I have often—both absent in writing, and present in conversation—suggested to you, my holy brother, that after your exposition of the Acts of the Apostles, you would be so good as to write upon the Gospel of Luke also. This you have as yet chosen rather to put off with a modest apology, than to execute." Again, in the course of the letter:—"Expound St. Luke in simple style. And as St. Ambrose has passed over, without notice, several things which seemed plain and undeserving of disquisition to a man of such profound learning, mind that you carefully explain these too; after looking into the work of other Fathers, either in your own words or in theirs. I am sure, too, that to your most heedful study, who spend wakeful days and nights in meditating in the law of the Lord, the Author of light will reveal the true sense of those passages that have been passed over by him. For it is very right, and accordant with the administration of the goodness and equity which is from above, that you who have wholly withdrawn yourself from worldly occupations, and pursue with unwearied mind the eternal and true light of wisdom, should here obtain a fragment of that purer intelligence, and hereafter contemplate with a pure heart the King himself in his glory, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." In these words the holy man both gives us a hint of the sanctity of this venerable doctor, and shows that he was always free from worldly occupations, and devoted to busy leisure in the contemplation of true and eternal wisdom.

§ 13. Finally,—and this also Beda mentions of himself,—during his whole life, which he spent in his dwelling in the oft-mentioned monastery of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, he gave up all his time, as is apparent from what has been already said, to meditation upon the Scriptures, and in the interval between the observance of the regular discipline and the daily duty of singing at church, he counted it his delight to be always either studying, or teaching, or writing. And so after his works had been

finished with the greatest labour, and with blameless application for nine-and-twenty years, having received the reward of his holy conversation and pious labour in the church, he groaned, being burdened with the weight of the body of this death, desiring that the house of his earthly tabernacle being dissolved, he might be deemed worthy to have "a dwelling of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." [2 Cor. v. 1.] And, therefore, as a precaution that they might not be forgotten, having specified by their titles all the books that he had written, when the laying down of his tabernacle was at hand, he, with the ardour of incredible longing, panting for the fountain of water that springeth up unto life eternal, uttered this short prayer:—

"I beseech Thee, merciful Jesu, seeing that Thou hast graciously granted me sweetly to taste the words of thy wisdom, to grant me also, of thy goodness, to come at last to Thee, the fountain of all wisdom, and to appear for ever before thy face."[1]

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## Here begins the Second Book.

§ 14. Thus the soul of the venerable man sighing after God, being melted in the fire of divine love, wished, yea fainted, for the coming of the Lord, that, beholding the God of gods in Sion—having cast off that which is in part, he might apprehend that which is perfect—and that which he here saw in a glass darkly, he might there see face to face. The Godhead was present in mercy to the wishes and prayers of his suppliant servant, and willed that he, who in mercy and pity was to be crowned, should be purged with the discipline of holy castigation, in order that no spot or wrinkle of sin might remain in him; so that, being purer than the purest gold, purified in the furnace of a long sickness, he might shine as a precious stone in the heavenly Jerusalem, which is built as a city.

§ 15. At last he was seized with a severe attack of tightness of the chest, insomuch that, owing to difficulty in the passage of the throat, his voice became scarcely audible, being checked by a gasping for breath. And this suffering from nearly-intercepted breathing continued to afflict him for many, that is to say, for fifty-three days; but as virtue is made perfect in weakness, he gladly, with the apostle, gloried in his infirmities [2 Cor. xii. 5]: for, unless when lassitude, by little and little, obliged him to slumber, neither the sun by day nor the moon by night saw him abstaining from the praises of God; so that, even then upon the bed of pain, he would break forth into expressions of exultation or confession:—"I will confess unto Thee, O Lord, in the uprightness of my heart, who, in chastising, chastisest me, that Thou mayest not deliver me over unto death, that when I enter the gates of righteousness, I may, with the blessed that dwell in thine house, be thought worthy to praise Thee for ever and ever." The saving doctrine, too, namely the flow of that river which was wont to make glad the city of God, that is, the holy church, although it grew languid, still did not even then cease to flow from his lips—that is, the pipe of living water.

§ 16. This is attested in his letter to his fellow-disciple, Cuthwin, by Cuthbert, who with others never for a moment quitted the bed-side of his sick and dying master. "Day after day," says he, "he would read the holy Scriptures to us his disciples, and expound to us their mystic meaning. And after reading, he would pass the rest of the day in singing with the spirit, singing with the understanding also: for, instructed by the teaching of holy David, he at once praised and prayed to the Lord "that He would deliver him from his enemies, because the Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him in truth; that he would do the will of them that fear Him, and hear their cry, and save them." He had already, a long time before, very carefully corrected his works; and now, too, though he was constantly swooning from shortness of breath, he again and again set him-

[1] See the Eccl. Hist. § 456.

self to amend some minor matters that had been overlooked while he was occupied with things of greater moment, in order that, when reposing in peace from his labours in the place which was prepared for him, not only no sentiment of his might offend any ecclesiastical person, but no expression either gaping with vowels or rugged with consonants might occasion uneasiness to the learned grammarian. For, as has been remarked, however elegant and disciplined the genius may be, and however, by long practice, the language may glide smoothly on, still, unless it be smoothed and polished by the author's hand, the rust of negligence will betray itself.

§ 17. While thus engaged, the memorable doctor was convulsed with still more violent pantings; and now, on the verge of a happy triumph after his departure, he was vehemently urged on to pay the debt of death by a difficulty of breathing; while a swelling that indicated the commencement of mortification had already appeared in the lower parts of his body. And he, like a branch abiding in Christ, the vine, although he had already brought forth the fruit of a sweet odour, yet did God, the husbandman, purge him by scourging him more severely, that he might bring forth a greater abundance of wholesome fruit. But lest he should curse God to his face, by murmuring against the will of his Lord, he draws from the mercy-seat of God's word sayings to confirm his hope and exultation:—"My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him. For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. For," saith the apostle, "what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" [Heb. xii. 5, 6.] And again, of those that are predestinated for the kingdom of God, he says:—"He who spared not his own Son, but gave Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" "When," said he, "this promise shall be fulfilled, what shall we be, what manner of persons shall we be, what blessings shall we receive in that kingdom, seeing that, through Christ dying for us, we have already received such a pledge?" On the other hand, he thought that nothing was so unhappy as the happiness of sinners who pass their days in pleasure, and in a moment go down into hell; who are not occupied in the labours of men, and are not scourged with men, that they may be tormented for ever with devils. And truly the divine severity allows such persons the desires of their heart without stint, because it condemns them with terrible and righteous sentence; and against them, under the character of undone and lost Jerusalem, is that tremendous sentence passed by God when he is forsaking them:—"I will make my fury toward thee to rest, and my jealousy shall depart from thee." [Ezek. xiv. 42.] But as for those whom He hath predestinated as vessels of mercy, "He visits their offences with a rod, and their sins with scourges;" upon whom He will bestow the blessing of the predestinated inheritance, "when," as the Scripture saith, "He giveth his beloved sleep." [Ps. cxxvii. 2.] And that saying of St. Ambrose, "I have not so lived as to be ashamed to have lived amongst you; neither am I afraid to die," is a brief commendation, but enough for a man whose walk was perfect. Nor is it to be set down as a mark of arrogance that what was imitable by all, he affirmed of himself, for the benefit of those who heard him, that they might "glorify our Father who is in heaven:" and this, too, when he was just at his last gasp. When the praise of virtue puffs not up the praised heart with pride, and when the hearers are the more inflamed with a zeal for virtue, the condition of the body sets before their eyes the absolute unavoidableness of death; wherefore the apostle, (who had said just before, "I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God," [1 Cor. xv. 9,]) when the hour of his departure was at hand, commending himself, but still in the Lord, that "he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord," saith, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." [2 Tim. iv. 8.]

§ 18. With these and similar passages of Scripture, he, in a measure, deadened his sense of pain in the midst of all his infirmities, whilst with tears of love he drew in "the multitude of thy mercy, O Lord, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that

trust in Thee." [Ps. xxxi. 19.] Meanwhile began the annual order of the seasons to bring round the festive day of the church, on which the Son of God, ascending with triumph into the highest heaven, by his power led our captivity captive: a day, I say, longed for by Beda, which was to bring to a close his transient day, and to give a beginning to that which lasteth for ever and ever. Wherefore he, it would appear, forewarned of the hour of his departure, on the day before his death commanded his disciples to come near, that they might deliberately ask for his solution of any doubts that were still lingering in their minds, and commit his solutions to writing, lest they should forget them. And then there was the interrogation of the inquirer mixed with weeping; aye, and the voice of eager questioners choked with sobs. And while unrestrained grief cannot be sated with tears, it checks the issue of the breath in the very throat. And no wonder; for when once they shall have lost such a master, they must abandon all hope of ever receiving instruction like his.

§ 19. And soon after an affectionate circle of brethren encompass the dying man, who exhorts them, that, forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forward to those things that are before, they should obtain the prize of the high calling of God, and bear in mind the lesson taught by the example of Joseph's Egyptian mistress, namely, that the cloak to worldly concupiscence, that is, the ensnaring ties of things secular, must be cast aside; that while they rid themselves of her unchaste embraces by flight, by bringing the sinful flesh into subjection, they must subdue the kingdom of Egypt, that is, the sway of their vices. He tells them that they can in no otherwise give an experimental proof of Christ dwelling in them than by the spirit of holy charity, which cannot be sundered. That they, who, by communion of the bread from heaven, are made one body in Christ, must not be divided from the unity of the same body by the spirit of dissension. And, "Oh," said he, "my most beloved brethren, since I must now pay the debt of nature, I beseech you to implore the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, that, through Him in whom the prince of this world found nothing, He would send the angel of peace to meet me for my good, encompassed by whose guardian care I shall not be confounded when I speak with mine enemies in the gate. For indeed I long to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, whose death having destroyed death, I firmly trust that I shall pass from death to life. And if I have in any measure toiled on your behalf, if I have brought to the church any fruit, however small, I ask of you no other return, than that, when I am gone, you will not forget me in that place where Christ is at once the priest and the peace-offering." This touched the affectionate hearts of the brethren, who at last gave full vent to their tears—the result, on the one hand, of exceeding joy; on the other, of boundless grief. They rejoiced that they had had a share in cherishing him who was now on the point of going to heaven; they mourned, because in him a light of the church was about to be extinguished. But because faith hath sometimes no perception of its loss, however great that loss may be, they did not so much deplore their bereavement, as congratulate themselves upon his entering upon his abode with God, to whom all things live.

§ 20. All this time, while he was in joyful expectation of the hour of death, or rather of the beginning of life eternal, there remained one portion of Scripture, respecting which his disciples felt themselves constrained to ask their master's opinion. When they had obtained this from him, and it had been written down, and when the transcriber said, "It is finished," catching at the word of consummation with more than his usual cheerfulness, he joyfully exclaimed, "Well and truly hast thou spoken: *It is finished.*" That was all: he begged to be laid upon the floor of his little cell, in which he had been wont to write, to dictate, to study, and teach; and there he lay, with his head raised a little by the hands of his friends, so that, with the oratory facing him, in which he had been accustomed to pray in secret, and the very sight of which now afforded him pleasure, he might "worship toward thy holy temple, and confess thy name, O Lord." Preparing himself in this way for his journey heavenward, and for his approach to God the Fountain of living water, he said, "My heart said unto Thee, O Lord, I have

sought thy face. O Lord, I beseech Thee, turn not away from thy face, upon which the angels desire to gaze."

§ 21. Now came the festive day of memorable solemnity—the day on which our Head and Chief went before us into heaven, that thither the members of his believing people might follow Him: when this holy person, as if his eyes were fixed upon Jesus now ascending, sighed through all his frame to follow Him, the breath now panting in his hands, with his hands stretched out in praise of the ascension of Jesus Christ, as one who was himself on the point of ascending, he exclaimed, "O King of glory, Lord of power, who didst ascend this day, a victor, above all heavens, leave us not destitute, leave us not destitute, but send to us the promise of the Father, even the Spirit of truth. Hallelujah." When he had added the praise of the holy and undivided Trinity, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost," as he was naming the Holy Spirit, his spirit was loosened from the flesh, and was instantly carried to heaven by a blessed company of holy spirits, where mingling with the hymning choir in the new Jerusalem, the blessed man joins for ever in praising the King eternal, the Lord of hosts, One in substance, Three in Persons.

§ 22. Thus went the way of his fathers that pillar and Doctor of the church, the venerable Beda; and thereupon the devoted affection of the brethren, after bemoaning with tears the lot of our mortality, and testifying their joy in the hope of a resurrection, with anthems, that re-echoed from every side, reverently celebrated his obsequies, and solemnly committed to the tomb the remains of him who had been at once their pupil and their instructor. He entered upon his sleep of eternal repose in the reign of Ceolwulf, in the year of our Lord seven hundred and thirty-five, and in the fifty-ninth year of his age, which was the hundred and first year after the church of Christ had been founded and established in the province of the Bernicii by a most illustrious king and a most holy bishop, I mean Oswald and Aidan, which still exists, and exults in the catholic faith, under its author and ruler God, the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, whom, living and reigning for ever with the Father and the Holy Spirit, every spirit praises and worships as the Lord.

THE

# ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

OF

# THE ENGLISH NATION.

BY THE VENERABLE BEDA.

## BOOK I.

### PREFACE.

*To the most glorious King Ceolwulph,*[1] *Beda, the Servant of Christ, and Presbyter.*

I FORMERLY, at your request, most readily transmitted to you the Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation, which I had lately published, that you might read it, and give it your approbation; and I now send it again to be transcribed, and more fully considered at your leisure. And I cannot but commend the sincerity and zeal, with which you not only diligently give ear to hear the words of Holy Scripture, but also industriously take care to become acquainted with the actions and sayings of former men of renown, especially those of our own nation. For when history relates good things of good men, the attentive hearer is excited to imitate that which is good; or when it mentions evil things of wicked persons, nevertheless the religious and pious hearer or reader, by shunning that which is hurtful and perverse, is the more earnestly excited to perform those things which he knows to be good, and worthy of God. Of which you also being most deeply sensible, are desirous that the said history should be more fully made familiar not only to yourself, but also to those over whom the Divine Authority has appointed you governor, from your great regard to their general welfare.

1 Ceolwulf, king of Northumbria, succeeded Osric 9 May, 729, and in 737 he resigned his crown, and became a monk at Lindisfarne. The date of his death is uncertain. Mabillon, (Act. SS. ord. S. Bened. III. ii. 159,) following Florence, assigns it to A.D. 760; but a preference should apparently be given to the authority of the northern historians, Symeon of Durham and Hoveden, who refer it to 764. An outline of his history may be seen in the Acta Sanctorum of the Bollandists, Jan. tom. i. p. 1081, and in the Acta Sanctorum ord. S. Bened. III. ii. 158.

§ 2. But to the end that I may remove both from yourself and other readers or hearers of this history all occasion of doubting as to what I have written, I will take care briefly to intimate from what authors I chiefly learned the same.

My principal authority and assistant in this work was the most learned and reverend Abbot Albinus;[1] who, educated in the church of Canterbury by those most venerable and learned men, archbishop Theodore of blessed memory, and the abbot Adrian, carefully transmitted to me by Nothelm,[2] the pious priest of the church of London, either in writing, or by word of mouth of the same Nothelm, all that he thought worthy of memory, that had been done in the province of Kent, or in the adjacent parts, by the disciples of the blessed pope Gregory, as he had learned the same either from written records, or the traditions of his ancestors. The same Nothelm, afterwards going to Rome, having, with leave of the pope Gregory,[3] who now presides over that church, searched into the archives of the holy Roman see, found there some epistles of the blessed pope Gregory, and other popes; and returning home, by the advice of the aforesaid most reverend father Albinus, he brought them to me, to be inserted in my history. Thus, from the beginning of this volume to the time when the English nation received the faith of Christ, we have learned what we have stated from the writings of our predecessors, and from them gathered matter for our history; but from that time till the present, what was transacted in the church of Canterbury, by the disciples of St. Gregory or their successors, and under what kings the same happened, has been conveyed to us by Nothelm, through the care of the aforesaid abbot Albinus. They also partly informed me by what bishops, and under what kings, the provinces of the East and West Saxons, as also of the East Angles, and of the Northumbrians, received the faith of Christ. In short, I was chiefly encouraged in venturing to undertake this work, by the persuasions of the same Albinus. In like manner, Daniel,[4] the most reverend bishop of the West Saxons, who is still living, communicated to me in writing some things relating to the Ecclesiastical History of that province, and that next adjoining to it of the South Saxons, as also of the Isle of Wight. But how, by the pious ministry of the religious priests of Christ, Cedd and Ceadda, the province of the Mercians was brought to the faith of Christ, which they knew not before, and how that of the East Saxons recovered the same, after having renounced it, and

[1] Albinus, abbot of Canterbury, must not be confounded, as some writers have done, with his more celebrated namesake, Albinus, or Alcuin, of York, who died in 804. A letter from Beda to this correspondent of his, thanking him for the transmission of documents to be inserted in his Ecclesiastical History, will be found in its proper place.

[2] This Nothelm succeeded Tatwyne as archbishop of Canterbury, and died in 739 or 741.

[3] Possibly Gregory II, who filled the papal chair from 19 May, 715, to 11 Feb. 731, but more probably Gregory III, who succeeded to the vacant throne and occupied it until 741.

[4] Daniel, bishop of the West Saxons, resigned his see in 744; the date of his death is uncertain. Many of his letters will be found in the correspondence with Boniface.

how those fathers lived and died, we diligently learned from the brethren of the monastery, which was built by them, and is called Laestingaeu.[1] What ecclesiastical transactions took place in the province of the East Angles, was partly made known to us from the writings and tradition of our ancestors, and partly by the relation of the most reverend abbot Esi. What was done towards promoting the faith of Christ, and what was the sacerdotal succession in the province of Lindissi, we learned either from the letters of the most reverend prelate Cyniberet, or by word of mouth from other persons of good credit. But what was done in the church throughout the different districts in the province of the Northumbrians, from the time when they received the faith of Christ till this present, I received not from any one particular author, but by the faithful testimony of innumerable witnesses, who might well know or remember the same; in addition to what I had of my own knowledge. Wherein it is to be observed, that what I have written concerning our most holy father, bishop Cuthbert,[2] either in this volume, or in my treatise on his actions, I partly took, and faithfully copied from what I found previously written of him by the brethren of the church of Lindisfarne, yielding simple faith to the narrative which I read; partly, at the same time, taking care to add such things as I could myself have knowledge of by the most certain testimony of faithful men. And I humbly entreat the reader, that if he shall in this writing of mine find anything not delivered according to the truth, he will not impute the same to me, for I (as the true rule of history requires), have laboured sincerely to commit to writing such things as I could gather from common report, for the instruction of posterity.

§ 3. Moreover,[3] I beseech all men who shall hear or read this history of our nation, that for my manifold infirmities both of mind and body, they will remember to offer up frequent supplications to the throne of Grace. And I further pray, that in recompense for the labour wherewith I have recorded those events, connected with each province, or Higher Places,[4] which were most worthy of note, and most grateful to the ears of their inhabitants, I may for my reward find the benefit of their pious prayers.

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### CHAP. I.[5]—OF THE SITUATION OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND, AND OF THEIR ANCIENT INHABITANTS.

§ 4. BRITAIN, an island in the ocean, formerly called Albion, is situated between the north and west, opposite, though at a considerable distance, to the coasts of Germany, France, and Spain, which form the greatest part of Europe. It extends 800 miles in length

[1] Probably, near Whitby; but its exact locality is uncertain.

[2] Beda's own narrative of the life of St. Cuthbert, and the earlier narrative to which he here alludes, will be found in their own proper places in this collection.

[3] The greater number of the MSS. place this paragraph at the end of the work, but the arrangement which is here adopted has the authority of the earliest known copy.

[4] Beda here refers to his treatise upon Holy Places.

[5] This chapter is a compilation from various authors, chiefly from Pliny, Solinus, Orosius, and Gildas.

towards the north, and is 200 miles in breadth, except where several promontories extend further in breadth, by which its compass is made to be 3675 miles. To the south, as you pass along the nearest shore of the Belgic Gaul, the first place in Britain which opens to the eye, is the city of "Rutubi Portus," by the English corrupted into "Reptacestir."[1] The distance from hence across the sea to Gessoriacum,[2] the nearest shore of the Morini, is fifty miles, or as some write, 450 furlongs. On the back of the island, where it opens upon the boundless ocean, it has the islands called Orcades.

§ 5. Britain is an island rich in grain and trees, and is well adapted for feeding cattle and beasts of burden. It also produces vines in some places, and has plenty of land and water-fowl of several sorts; it is celebrated also for rivers abounding in fish, and for plentiful springs. It has the greatest profusion of salmon and eels; porpoises are also frequently taken, and dolphins, as also whales; besides many sorts of shell-fish, such as muscles, in which are often found excellent pearls of all colours, red, purple, violet, and green, but mostly white. There is also a very great abundance of cockles, from which the scarlet dye is made; the most beautiful colour of which never fades with the heat of the sun or the washing of the rain, but the older it is the more lovely it becomes. It has both salt and hot springs, and from them flow rivers which furnish hot baths adapted for all ages and sexes, and locally distributed accordingly. For water, as St. Basil[3] says, receives the quality of heat by running along certain metals, and becomes not only hot, but even scalding. Britain has also many veins of metals,[4] as copper, iron, lead, and silver; it produces much and excellent jet, which is black and sparkling, glittering when placed near the fire; when heated it drives away serpents; being warmed with rubbing, it holds fast whatever is applied to it like amber. The island was formerly embellished with twenty-eight noble cities,[5] besides innumerable castles, which were all strongly secured with walls, towers, gates and locks.

§ 6. And, since Britain is situated almost under the North Pole, the nights are light in summer, so that at midnight the beholders are often in doubt whether the evening twilight still continues, or that of the morning has already come on; for the sun, in the night, returns eastward under the earth, through the northern regions at no great distance from them. For this reason the days are of a great length in summer, as, on the contrary, the nights are in winter, for the sun then withdraws into the southern parts, so that the nights are eighteen hours long. Thus, also, the nights are extraordinarily short in summer, as are the days in winter, that is, of only six equinoctial hours; whereas, in Armenia, Macedonia, Italy, and other countries of the same line, the longest day or night extends but to fifteen hours, and the shortest to nine.

[1] Now Richborough, in Kent.
[2] Boulogne.
[3] In Hexaem. tom. i. p. 39, ed. Bened.
[4] See Camden's Britan. col. 908.
[5] An attempt to identify these cities may be seen in Ussher's Antiq. Brit. p. 33, ed. 1687.

§ 7. This island at the present time, following the number of the books in which the Divine Law was written, contains five nations, the Angles, Britons, Scots, Picts, and Latins, each in its own peculiar dialect cultivating one and the same sublime study of Divine truth and true sublimity. The Latin tongue, by the study of the Scriptures, has become common to all the rest. At first this island had no other inhabitants but the Britons, from whom it derived its name, and who, carried over into Britain, as is reported, from the tract of Armorica, possessed themselves of the southern parts thereof. When they, beginning at the south, had made themselves masters of the greatest part of the island, it happened, that the nation of the Picts, from Scythia, as is reported, putting to sea, in a few long ships, were driven by the winds beyond all the shores of Britain, and arrived on the northern coasts of Ireland, where, finding the nation of the Scots, they begged to be allowed to settle among them in those parts, but could not succeed in obtaining their request. Ireland is the greatest island next to Britain, and lies to the west of it; but as it is shorter than Britain to the north, so, on the other hand, it runs out far beyond it to the south, opposite to the northern parts of Spain, though a spacious sea lies between them. The Picts, as has been said, arriving in this island by sea, desired to have a place granted them in which they might settle. The Scots answered that the island could not contain them both; but "We can give you good advice," (said they,) "what to do; we know there is another island, not far from ours, to the eastward, which we often see at a distance, when the days are clear. If you will go thither, you will obtain a settlement; or, if any should oppose you, you shall have our assistance." The Picts, accordingly, sailing over into Britain, began to inhabit the northern parts of the island, for the Britons were possessed of the southern. Now the Picts having no wives, they asked them of the Scots, who would not consent to grant them upon any other terms than that when any difficulty should arise, they should choose a king from the female royal race rather than from the male; which custom, as is well known, has been observed among the Picts to this day.

§ 8. In process of time, Britain, after the Britons and the Picts, received a third nation, the Scots, who, migrating from Ireland under their leader, Reuda,[1] either by fair means, or by force of arms, secured to themselves those settlements among the Picts which they still possess. From the name of their commander, they are to this day called Dalreudini; for, in their language, "Daal" signifies a part. Ireland, in breadth, and for wholesomeness and serenity of climate, far surpasses Britain; for the snow scarcely ever lies there above three days: no man makes hay in the summer for winter's provision, or builds stables for his beasts of burden. No reptile is found there, and no snake can live there; for, though often carried

[1] Reuda is considered by Ussher and his authorities to have been the son of Chonar II. (p. 320); but Lappenberg is inclined to identify him with Historcth, the son of Historin, whom Nennius (cap. viii.) designates as the leader of this people.

thither out of Britain, as soon as the ship nears the shore, and the scent of the air reaches them, they die. On the contrary, almost all the produce of the island is good against poison. In short, we have seen that when some persons have been bitten by serpents, the scrapings of leaves of books that had been brought out of Ireland, being put into water, and given them to drink, have immediately expelled the spreading poison, and consumed and assuaged the swelling of the inflated body. The island abounds in milk and honey, nor is there any want of vines, fish, or fowl; and it is remarkable for the hunting of deer and goats. It is properly the country of the Scots, who, migrating from thence, as has been said, added a third nation in Britain to the Britons and the Picts. There is a very large gulf of the sea, which formerly divided the nation of the Picts from the Britons; which gulf runs from the west very far into the land, where, to this day, stands the strong city of the Britons, called Alcluith. The Scots, arriving on the north side of this bay, as we have said, settled themselves there as in their own country.

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### Chap. II. [B.C. 55.]—Caius Julius Cæsar, the first Roman that came into Britain.

§ 9. This same Britain had never been visited by the Romans, and was, indeed, entirely unknown to them before the time of Caius Julius Cæsar, who, in the year 693 after the building of Rome, but the sixtieth[1] year before the incarnation of our Lord, being consul with Lucius Bibulus, and afterwards while he made war upon the Germans and the Gauls, which were divided only by the river Rhine, came into the province of the Morini, from whence is the nearest and shortest passage into Britain. Here, having provided about eighty ships of burden and vessels with oars, he sailed (B.C. 55) over into Britain; where, being first roughly handled in a battle, and then meeting with a violent storm, he lost a very considerable part of his fleet, no small number of foot, and almost all his horse soldiers. Returning into Gaul, he put his legions into winter-quarters, and gave orders for building six hundred sail of both sorts, with which he again passed over early in spring into Britain; but, whilst he was marching with his army towards the enemy, the ships, riding at anchor, were by a tempest either dashed one against another, or driven upon the sands and wrecked. Forty of them perished, the rest were, with much difficulty, repaired. Cæsar's cavalry was, at the first charge, defeated by the Britons, and Labienus,[2] the tribune, slain. In the second engagement, he, with great hazard to his men, put the conquered Britons to flight. Thence he proceeded to the river Thames, where an immense multitude of the enemy had posted themselves on the farther side

[1] Cæsar's first expedition into Britain was in the year B.C. 55; his second, and longer one, in B.C. 54.

[2] Beda here meant to refer to Q. Laberius Durus, whose death is mentioned by Cæsar. See Excerpta de Britannia, p. xxxiii. in Petrie's Monum. Hist. Brit. Camd. Brit. col. 217.

of the river, under the command of Cassobellaun,[1] and fenced the bank of the river and almost all the ford under water with sharp stakes: the remains of which are to be seen to this day, each apparently about the thickness of a man's thigh, and being cased with lead, were fixed immovably in the bottom of the river.[2] This, being perceived and avoided by the Romans, the barbarians, not able to stand the shock of the legions, hid themselves in the woods, whence they grievously and frequently galled the Romans with repeated sallies. In the meantime, the strong city of Trinovantum,[3] with its commander Androgeus,[4] surrendered to Cæsar, giving him forty hostages. Many other cities, following their example, came into compact with the Romans. By their guidance, Cæsar at length, with much difficulty, took Cassobellaun's town,[5] situated between two marshes, fortified by the adjacent woods, and plentifully furnished with all necessaries. After this, Cæsar returned from Britain into Gaul, but he had no sooner put his legions into winter-quarters, than he was suddenly beset and distracted with wars and tumults raised against him on every side.

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CHAP. III.[6] [A.D. 46.]—CLAUDIUS, THE SECOND OF THE ROMANS WHO CAME INTO BRITAIN, BROUGHT THE ISLANDS ORCADES INTO SUBJECTION TO THE ROMAN EMPIRE; AND VESPASIAN, ALSO SENT BY HIM, REDUCED THE ISLE OF WIGHT UNDER THEIR DOMINION.

§ 10. In the year of Rome, 798, [A.D. 46,] Claudius, the fourth emperor from Augustus, being desirous to approve himself a useful prince to the republic, and eagerly bent upon war and conquest, undertook an expedition into Britain, which seemed to be stirred up to rebellion by the refusal to give up certain deserters.[7] He was the only one, either before or after Julius Cæsar, who had dared to approach the island; yet, within a very few days, without any fight or bloodshed, the greatest part of the island surrendered into his hands. He also added to the Roman empire the Orcades,[8] which lie in the ocean beyond Britain, and returning to Rome the sixth month after his departure, he gave his son the name of Britannicus. This war he concluded in the fourth year of his empire, which is the forty-sixth

[1] In the Latinized form, Cassivellanus, we probably recognise the British Caswallon, *i.e.* the prince of the Cassii.

[2] The spot at which the Romans crossed the river Thames is uncertain. Camden supposed it to have been at Cowey Stakes, near Lalcham. Brit. col. 183, 366.

[3] Probably London. See Camd. col. 363.

[4] From a comparison of this narrative with that of Cæsar, it would appear that Mandubratius is here meant. See Petrie's Excerpta, p. xxxiii. Camd. col. 363.

[5] It seems agreed among antiquarians that we are here to understand St. Alban's. —Camd. col. 351.

[6] The date A.D. 46, here assigned to the invasion of Claudius, is derived from Beda's own computation, § 452. Lappenberg places it three years earlier. Pagi thinks it occurred A.D. 44, (ad an. § 3.) Besides Orosius and Eutropius, this expedition is illustrated by Dio Cassius, lx. 19, and Suet. de Claud. cap. 17.

[7] These deserters were probably Beric and his associates, concerning whom see Dio, as above cited; Petrie, p. 54.

[8] According to the narrative of Tacitus, (cap. xiv.) these islands were first subdued by Agricola; but Beda's statement is supported by the authority of Eutropius.

from the Incarnation of our Lord. In which year there happened a most grievous famine in Syria, which in the Acts of the Apostles is recorded to have been foretold by the prophet Agabus. [Acts xi. 28.]

§ 11. Vespasian, who was emperor after Nero, being sent into Britain by the same Claudius, brought also under the Roman dominion the Isle of Wight,[1] which is next to Britain on the south, and is about thirty miles in length from east to west, and twelve from south to north; being six miles distant from the southern coast of Britain at the east end, and three at the west. Nero, succeeding Claudius in the empire, attempted nothing whatever in martial affairs; and, therefore, among other innumerable detriments brought upon the Roman state, he almost lost Britain; for under him two most noble towns[2] were there taken and destroyed.

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CHAP. IV. [A.D. 156.]—LUCIUS, KING OF BRITAIN, WRITING TO POPE ELEUTHERUS, DESIRES TO BE MADE A CHRISTIAN.

§ 12. IN the year of our Lord's Incarnation 156, Marcus Antoninus Verus, the fourteenth from Augustus, was made emperor, together with his brother, Aurelius Commodus.[3] In their time, whilst Eleutherus, a holy man, presided over the Roman church, Lucius, king of Britain, sent a letter to him, entreating that by his command he might be made a Christian. He soon obtained the effect of his pious request, and the Britons preserved the faith, which they had received, uncorrupted and entire, in peace and tranquillity until the time of the emperor Diocletian.

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CHAP. V. [A.D. 189.]—HOW THE EMPEROR SEVERUS DIVIDED THAT PART OF BRITAIN, WHICH HE SUBDUED, FROM THE REST BY A RAMPART.

§ 13. IN the year of our Lord 189, Severus, an African, born at Leptis, in the province of Tripolis, received the imperial purple. He was the seventeenth from Augustus, and reigned seventeen years. Being naturally stern, and engaged in many wars, he governed the state vigorously, but with much trouble. Having been victorious in all the grievous civil wars which happened in his time [A.D. 208], he was drawn into Britain by the revolt of almost all the confederate tribes; and, after many great and dangerous battles, he thought fit to divide, from the other unconquered nations, that part of the island which he had recovered, not with a wall, as some

[1] See Dio Cassius, lx. 20; Eutrop. vii. 19.

[2] Camelodunum is generally supposed to be the town of Maldon (Camd. Brit. col. 416): but Mannert argues successfully for Colchester. See Geog. der Greich. u. Romer. p. 157; Archæolog. iii. 165.

[3] The chronology of Beda is here confused and erroneous. The reader who is interested in its elucidation, may consult Stillingfleet's Orig. p. xiv.; Alford. Annal. i. 49; and the passages referred to by Ussher, in his Index Chronolog. appended to his Antiq. Britan. Eccl. A.D. 176 and 179. The conversion of Lucius may safely be assigned to a period limited by the pontificate of Eleutherus on the one hand, and the death of Aurelius on the other.

imagine, but with a vallum. For a wall is made of stones, but a vallum, with which camps are fortified to repel the assaults of enemies, is made of sods, cut out of the earth, and raised high above the ground all round like a wall, so that there is in front the ditch whence the sods were taken, and strong stakes of wood fixed before it. Thus Severus drew a great ditch[1] and strong rampart, fortified with frequent towers, from sea to sea; and was afterwards taken sick and died[2] at York. He left two sons, Bassianus and Geta; of whom Geta died, adjudged a public enemy; but Bassianus, having taken the surname of Antoninus, obtained the empire.

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CHAP. VI.[3] [A.D. 286.]—THE REIGN OF DIOCLETIAN, AND HOW HE PERSECUTED THE CHRISTIANS.

§ 14. IN the year of our Lord's Incarnation 286, Diocletian, the thirty-third from Augustus, being chosen emperor by the army, reigned twenty years, and created Maximian, surnamed Herculius, his colleague in the empire. In their time, [A.D. 287—94,] one Carausius, of very mean birth, but prompt of head and hand, being appointed to guard the sea-coasts, then infested by the Franks and Saxons, acted more to the prejudice than to the advantage of the commonwealth; and from his not restoring to its owners the booty taken from the robbers, but keeping all to himself, it was suspected that by intentional neglect he suffered the enemy to infest the frontiers. Maximian having ordered that he should be put to death, he took upon him the imperial robes, and possessed himself of Britain, and having most valiantly retained it for the space of seven years, he was at length put to death by the treachery of his associate, Allectus. The usurper, having thus got the island from Carausius, held it three years afterwards, and was then vanquished by Asclepiodotus, the captain of the Prætorian bands, who thus at the end of ten years restored Britain to the Roman empire.

§ 15. Meanwhile, Diocletian in the east, and Maximian Herculius in the west, commanded the churches to be destroyed, and the Christians to be persecuted and slain. This persecution was the tenth since the reign of Nero, and was more lasting and bloody than all the others before it; for it was carried on incessantly for the space of ten[4] years, with burning of churches, outlawing of innocent persons, and the slaughter of martyrs. At length, it reached Britain also, and many persons, with the constancy of martyrs, died in the confession of their faith.

[1] Concerning this line of defence, see Lappenberg, i. 43; Camd. Brit. col. 1045.

[2] A.D. 211; see Pagi ad an. 211, § 2.

[3] The whole of this chapter is taken from Orosius. See Petrie's Excerpta, p. lxxix.

[4] From A.D. 303 to 313, in which latter year the emperor Constantine embraced Christianity. Within these two dates occurred the events mentioned in the following chapter, probably in 304 or 305.

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CHAP. VII. [A.D. 304 or 305.]—THE PASSION OF ST. ALBAN AND HIS COMPANIONS, WHO AT THE SAME TIME SHED THEIR BLOOD FOR OUR LORD.

§ 16. In that persecution suffered St. Alban, of whom the priest Fortunatus, in his poem on the Praise of Virgins, where he makes mention of the blessed martyrs that came to the Lord from all parts of the world, says—

"In Britain's isle was holy Alban born."[1]

This Alban, being yet a pagan, at the time when the edicts of wicked princes were raging against Christians, gave entertainment in his house to a certain clergyman, flying from the persecutors. This man he observed to be engaged in continual prayer and watching day and night; when on a sudden the Divine grace shining on him, he began to imitate the example of faith and piety which was set before him, and being gradually instructed by his wholesome admonitions, he cast off the darkness of idolatry, and became a Christian in all sincerity of heart. The aforesaid clergyman having been some days entertained by him, it came to the ears of the wicked prince, that this holy confessor of Christ, whose time of martyrdom had not yet come, was concealed at Alban's house. Whereupon he sent some soldiers to make a stricter search after him. When they came to the martyr's cottage, St. Alban immediately presented himself to the soldiers, instead of his guest and master, clothed in the habit or long coat which he wore, and was led bound before the judge.

§ 17. It happened that the judge, at the same time when Alban was carried before him, was standing at the altar, and offering sacrifice to devils. When he saw Alban, being much enraged that he should thus, of his own accord, put himself into the hands of the soldiers, and incur such danger in behalf of his guest, he commanded him to be dragged up to the images of the devils, before which he stood, saying, "Because you have chosen to conceal a rebellious and sacrilegious person, rather than to deliver him up to the soldiers, that his contempt of the gods might meet with the penalty due to such blasphemy, you shall undergo all the punishment that was due to him, if you attempt to abandon the worship of our religion." But St. Alban, who had voluntarily declared himself a Christian to the persecutors of the faith, was not at all daunted at the prince's threats, but girt in the armour of spiritual warfare, he publicly declared that he would not obey the command. Then said the judge, "Of what family or race are you?"—"What does it concern you," answered Alban, "to know of what stock I am? If you desire to hear the truth of my religion, be it known to you, that I am now a Christian, and bound by christian duties."—"I ask your name," said the judge; "tell me it immediately."—"I am called Alban by my parents," replied he; "and I worship and adore the true and living God, who created all things." Then the judge, inflamed with anger, said, "If you will enjoy the happiness of eternal life, do not delay to offer sacrifice to the great gods."

[1] Fortunatus, De Laude Virginum, p. 190, ed. 1617.

Alban rejoined, "These sacrifices, which by you are offered to devils, neither can avail the subjects, nor answer the wishes or desires of those that offer up their supplications to them. On the contrary, whosoever shall offer sacrifice to these images, shall receive the everlasting pains of hell for his reward."

§ 18. The judge, hearing these words, and being much incensed, ordered this holy confessor of God to be scourged by the executioners, believing he might by stripes shake that constancy of heart, on which he could not prevail by words. He, being most cruelly tortured, bore the same patiently, or rather joyfully, for our Lord's sake. When the judge perceived that he was not to be overcome by tortures, or withdrawn from the exercise of the christian religion, he ordered him to be put to death. Being led to execution, he came to a river, which, with a most rapid course, ran between the wall of the town and the arena where he was to be executed. He there saw a multitude of persons of both sexes, and of various ages and conditions, who were doubtlessly assembled by Divine command, to attend the blessed confessor and martyr, and had so taken up the bridge on the river, that they could scarce pass over that evening. In short, almost all had gone out, so that the judge remained in the city without attendance. St. Alban, therefore, urged by an ardent and devout wish to arrive quickly at martyrdom, drew near to the stream, and on lifting up his eyes to heaven, the channel was immediately dried up, and he perceived that the water had departed and made way for him to pass on foot. Among the rest, the executioner, who was to have put him to death, observed this, and moved by Divine inspiration hastened to meet him at the place of execution, and casting down the sword which he had carried ready drawn, fell at his feet, praying that he rather might suffer with the martyr, whom he was ordered to execute, or, if possible, instead of him.

§ 19. Whilst he thus from a persecutor was become a companion in the faith, and there was a considerable delay among the other executioners, (the sword all the while lying on the ground), the reverend confessor of God, accompanied by the multitude, ascended a hill about 500 paces from the bank of the river, adorned, or rather clothed with all kinds of flowers, having its sides neither perpendicular, nor even craggy, but sloping down into a most beautiful plain, worthy from its lovely appearance to be dedicated by a martyr's blood. On the top of this hill, St. Alban prayed that God would give him water, and immediately a living spring broke out before his feet, the course being confined, so that all men perceived that the river also had been dried up in consequence of the martyr's presence. Nor was it likely that the martyr, who had left no water remaining in the river, should want some on the top of the hill, unless he thought it suitable to the occasion. The river having performed the holy service, returned to its natural course, leaving a testimony of its obedience. Here, therefore, the head of our most courageous martyr was struck off, and here he received that crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. But he who gave the wicked stroke to the neck of this just one, was not permitted to rejoice over the deceased;

for his eyes dropped upon the ground together with the blessed martyr's head.

§ 20. At the same time was also beheaded the soldier, who before, through the Divine admonition, refused to give the stroke to the holy confessor. Of whom it is apparent, that though he was not washed in the fountain of baptism, yet he was cleansed by the washing of his own blood, and rendered worthy to enter the kingdom of heaven. Then the judge, astonished at the novelty of so many heavenly miracles, ordered the persecution to cease immediately, beginning to honour the death of the saints, by which he before thought they might have been diverted from the christian faith. The blessed Alban suffered death on the tenth of the kalends of July [22d June], near the city of Verulam,[1] which is now by the English nation called Verlamacaestir, or Vaetlingacaestir, where afterwards, when peaceable christian times were restored, a church of wonderful workmanship, and suitable to his martyrdom, was erected. In which place, there ceases not to this day the cure of sick persons, and the frequent working of wonders.[2]

§ 21. At the same time suffered Aaron and Julius, citizens of the Urbs Legionum, and many more of both sexes in several places; who, when they had endured sundry torments, and their limbs had been torn after an unheard-of manner, having completed their sufferings, yielded up their souls to enjoy in the heavenly city a reward for the tortures through which they had passed.

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CHAP. VIII.[3] [A.D. 313.]—THE PERSECUTION CEASING, THE CHURCH IN BRITAIN ENJOYS PEACE TILL THE TIME OF THE ARIAN HERESY.

§ 22. WHEN the storm of persecution ceased, [A.D. 313,] the faithful Christians, who, during the time of danger, had hidden themselves in woods and deserts, and secret caves, appearing in public, rebuilt the churches which had been levelled with the ground; founded, erected, and finished the temples of the holy martyrs, and, as it were, displayed their conquering ensigns in all places; they celebrated festivals, and performed their sacred rites with clean hearts and mouths. This peace continued in the churches of Christ in Britain until the time of the Arian madness, which, having corrupted the whole world, infected this island also, so far removed from the rest of the globe, with the poison of its errors; and when the plague was thus conveyed across the sea, all the venom of every heresy immediately rushed into the island, ever fond of something new, and never holding firm to anything.

§ 23. At this time, Constantius, who, whilst Diocletian was alive, governed Gaul and Spain, a man of extraordinary meekness and courtesy, died in Britain. This man left his son Constantine, born of Helen his concubine, emperor of the Gauls. Eutropius writes, that Constantine, being created emperor in Britain, succeeded his father in the sovereignty. In his time the Arian heresy broke out,

[1] See Camd. Brit. col. 350.
[2] The history of St. Alban will be considered upon a future occasion.
[3] This chapter is a compilation from Gildas and Orosius.

and although it was detected and condemned in the Council of Nice, yet it nevertheless infected not only all the churches of the continent, but even those of the islands, with its pestilent and fatal doctrines.

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CHAP. IX. [A.D. 377.]—HOW, DURING THE REIGN OF GRATIAN, MAXIMUS, BEING CREATED EMPEROR IN BRITAIN, RETURNED INTO GAUL WITH A MIGHTY ARMY.

§ 24. IN the year of our Lord's Incarnation 377, Gratian, the fortieth from Augustus, held the empire six years after the death of Valens; though he had long before reigned with his uncle Valens, and his brother Valentinian. Finding the state of the commonwealth much impaired, and almost gone to ruin, for the purpose of re-invigorating the state, he invested Theodosius, a Spaniard, with the royal robes, at Sirmium, and made him emperor at once of Thrace and the eastern provinces. At which time [A.D. 383] Maximus, a man of valour and probity, and worthy to be an emperor, if he had not broken the oath of allegiance which he had taken, was made emperor by the army in Britain, almost against his own consent; he passed over into Gaul, and there, by treachery, slew the emperor Gratian, who was in consternation at his sudden invasion, and attempting to escape into Italy. His brother, Valentinian, expelled from Italy, fled into the East, where he was entertained by Theodosius with fatherly affection, and soon restored to the empire. Maximus the tyrant, being shut up in Aquileia, was there taken and put to death. [A.D. 388.]

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CHAP. X. [A.D. 394.]—HOW, IN THE REIGN OF ARCADIUS, PELAGIUS, A BRITON, INSOLENTLY ATTACKED THE GRACE OF GOD.

§ 25. IN the year of our Lord 394, Arcadius, the son of Theodosius, the forty-third from Augustus, taking the empire upon him, with his brother Honorius, held it thirteen years. In his time, Pelagius, a Briton, spread far and wide the infection of his perfidious doctrine against the assistance of the Divine Grace, being seconded therein by his associate, Julianus of Campania, whose anger was kindled by the loss of his bishopric, of which he had been formerly deprived. St. Augustine, and the other orthodox fathers, quoted many thousand catholic authorities against them, but yet they would not correct their madness; but, on the contrary, their folly, instead of being purged, was rather increased by contradiction, and they refused to embrace the truth. This, Prosper, the rhetorician, has beautifully expressed thus in heroic verse:—

> "A scribbler vile, inflamed with hellish spite,
> Against the great Augustine dared to write;
> Presumptuous serpent! from what midnight den
> Durst thou to crawl on earth and look at men?
> Sure thou wast fed on Britain's sea-girt plains,
> Or in thy breast Campanian sulphur reigns."[1]

[1] Allusion here is probably intended to be made to Pelagius, whose British name was Morgan, under the term "æquorei Britanni," and to Julian of Campania, by "Campanum gramen." Beda has entered into the history of this Julian at greater length in the Preface to his Treatise upon the Canticles, Opp. iv. 984, ed. fol. Basil.

CHAP. XI. [A.D. 407.]—HOW, DURING THE REIGN OF HONORIUS, GRATIAN AND CONSTANTINE WERE CREATED TYRANTS IN BRITAIN; AND SOON AFTER, THE FORMER WAS SLAIN IN BRITAIN, AND THE LATTER IN GAUL.

§ 26. IN the year 407, Honorius, the younger son of Theodosius, and the forty-fourth from Augustus, being emperor, (two years before the invasion of Rome by Alaric, king of the Goths, when the nations of the Alani, Suevi, Vandals, and many others with them, having defeated the Franks and passed the Rhine, ravaged all Gaul,) Gratianus Municeps was set up as tyrant, and killed. In his place, Constantine, one of the meanest soldiers, only for the hope occasioned by his name, and without any worth of his own to recommend him, was chosen emperor. As soon as he had taken upon him the command, he passed over into France, where being often imposed upon by the barbarians with faithless treaties, he caused much injury to the commonwealth. Whereupon count Constantius, by the command of Honorius, immediately marching into Gaul with an army, besieged him in the city of Arles, and put him to death. His son Constans, whom of a monk he had created Cæsar, was also put to death by his own count, Gerontius, at Vienne.

§ 27. Rome was taken by the Goths, in the year from its foundation 1164 [A.D. 409]. Then the Romans ceased to rule in Britain almost 470 years after Caius Julius Cæsar entered the island. They resided within the vallum, which, as we have mentioned,[1] Severus made across the island, on the south side of it, as the cities, temples, bridges, and paved roads there made, testify to this day; but they had a right of dominion over the farther parts of Britain, as also over the islands that are beyond Britain.

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CHAP. XII. [A.D. 414—416.]—THE BRITONS, BEING RAVAGED BY THE SCOTS AND PICTS, SOUGHT SUCCOUR FROM THE ROMANS, WHO, COMING A SECOND TIME, BUILT A WALL ACROSS THE ISLAND; BUT THE BRITONS BEING AGAIN INVADED BY THE AFORESAID ENEMIES, WERE REDUCED TO GREATER DISTRESS THAN BEFORE.

§ 28. FROM that time, the south part of Britain, destitute of armed soldiers, of martial stores, and of all its active youth, which had been led away by the rashness of the tyrants, never to return home, was wholly exposed to rapine, as being totally ignorant of the art of war. Whereupon they suddenly suffered many years under two very savage foreign nations, the Scots from the west, and the Picts from the north. We call these foreign nations, not on account of their being seated out of Britain, but because they were remote from that part of it which was possessed by the Britons; two friths of the sea lying between them, one of which runs in far and broad into the land of Britain, from the Eastern Ocean, and the other from the Western, though they do not reach so as to touch one another. The eastern has in the midst of it the city Giudi;[2] the western has on it, that is, on the right hand thereof, the city Alcluith,[3] which in

[1] At § 13.

[2] Giudi; "an ancient town or monastery upon Inch Keth, probably built of wood, as no vestige of it has been seen for ages." Mac Pherson's Geog. Illustr. of Scottish History. See also Camd. Brit. col. 1190.

[3] Dumbarton, on the frith of Clyde. Camd. Brit. col. 1218.

their language signifies the Rock Cluith, for it is close by the river of that name.

§ 29. On account of the irruption of these nations, the Britons sent messengers to Rome [A.D. 414] with letters in mournful manner, praying for succours, and promising perpetual subjection, provided that the impending enemy should be driven away. An armed legion was immediately sent them, which, arriving in the island, and engaging the enemy, slew a great multitude of them, drove the rest out of the territories of their allies, and having delivered them from their cruel oppressors, advised them to build a wall[1] between the two seas across the island, that it might secure them, and keep off the enemy; and thus they returned home with great triumph. The islanders raising the wall, as they had been directed, not of stone, as having no artist capable of such a work, but of sods, it was of no use. However, they drew it for many miles between the two friths[2] or inlets of the seas, which we have spoken of; to the end that where the defence of the water was wanting, they might use the vallum to defend their borders from the irruptions of the enemies. Of which work there erected, that is, of a vallum of extraordinary breadth and height, there are most evident remains to be seen at this day. It begins at about two miles' distance from the monastery of Abercurnig,[3] on the west, at a place called in the Pictish language, Peanfahel,[4] but in the English tongue, Penneltun, and running to the westward, ends near the city Alcluith.

§ 30. But the former enemies, when they perceived that the Roman soldiers were gone, immediately coming by sea, broke into the borders, trampled and overran all places, and like men mowing ripe corn, bore down all before them. Hereupon messengers are again sent to Rome, imploring aid, lest their wretched country should be utterly ruined, and the name of a Roman province, so long renowned among them, overthrown by the crulties of barbarous foreigners, might become utterly contemptible. A legion is accordingly sent again, and, arriving unexpectedly in autumn, made great slaughter of the enemy, obliging all those that could escape, to flee beyond the sea; whereas before, they were wont to carry off their yearly booty beyond the seas without any opposition. Then the Romans declared to the Britons, that they could not for the future be wearied with such troublesome expeditions for their sake, advising them rather to handle their weapons like men, and themselves undertake the charge of engaging their enemies, who would not prove too powerful for them, unless they were enervated by cowardice. Thinking, too, that it might be some help to the allies, whom they were forced to abandon, they built a strong stone wall from sea to sea, in a straight line between the towns that had been there built for fear of the enemy, and not far from the older trench of Severus. This famous wall, which is still to be seen, was built at the public and private expense, the Britons also lending their assistance. It is eight feet in breadth,

[1] On the history of this wall the reader may consult Lappenb. i. 60.
[2] The friths of Forth and Clyde.
[3] Now Abercorn, on the river Carron.
[4] See Camd. Brit. col. 1222.

and twelve in height, in a straight line from east to west, as is still visible to beholders. This being speedily finished, they gave that dispirited people good advice, and supply them with patterns to furnish them with arms. Besides, they built towers on the sea-coast to the southward, at proper distances, where their ships were, because there also the irruptions of the barbarians were apprehended; and so took leave of their friends, never to return again.

§ 31. After their departure, the Scots and Picts, understanding that the Romans had declared they would come no more, speedily returned, and growing more confident than they had been before, occupied all the northern and farthest part of the island, as far as to the wall. Hereupon a timorous guard was placed upon the fortification, where they pined away day and night in stupefied fear. On the other side, the enemy attacked them unceasingly with hooked weapons, by which the cowardly defendants were dragged from the wall, and dashed against the ground. At last, the Britons, forsaking their cities and wall, took to flight and were dispersed. The enemy pursued, and the slaughter was greater than on any former occasion; for the wretched natives were torn in pieces by their enemies, as lambs are torn by wild beasts. Thus, being expelled their dwellings and possessions, they saved themselves from starvation by robbing and plundering one another; augmenting foreign calamities by their own domestic broils, till the whole country was left destitute of food, except such as could be procured in the chase.

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CHAP. XIII. [A.D. 423.]—IN THE REIGN OF THEODOSIUS THE YOUNGER, PALLADIUS WAS SENT TO THE SCOTS THAT BELIEVED IN CHRIST; THE BRITONS BEGGING ASSISTANCE OF AËTIUS, THE CONSUL, COULD NOT OBTAIN IT.

§ 32. In the year of our Lord 423, Theodosius, the younger, next after Honorius, being the forty-fifth from Augustus, governed the Roman empire twenty-six years. In the eighth year of his reign, Palladius[1] was sent by Celestinus, the Roman pontiff, to the Scots that believed in Christ, to be their first bishop. In the twenty-third[2] year of his reign, Aëtius, a renowned person, being also a patrician, discharged his third consulship with Symmachus for his colleague. To him the wretched remains of the Britons sent a letter,[3] which began thus:—"To Aëtius, thrice Consul, the groans of the Britons." And in the sequel of the letter they thus expressed their calamities:—"The barbarians drive us to the sea; the sea drives us back to the barbarians: between them we are exposed to

[1] A vast fund of information respecting Palladius and his mission has been collected by Ussher in his Brit. Eccl. Antiq. in the passages referred to under the year 431, in the Index Chronolog. His mission was a short one, having begun and terminated, by his death, in that year.

[2] Baronius, (A.D. 446, § 1,) followed by Camden, here accuses Beda of faulty chronology in thus associating the 23d regnal year of Thedosius with the consulate of Aëtius and Symmachus; but Ussher has successfully vindicated the accuracy of our historian in this respect. See Brit. Eccl. Antiq. p. 199. Pagi ad an. 446, § 2.

[3] Polydore Virgil gives the whole of this letter, without stating whence he obtained it. It is most probably spurious.

two sorts of death; we are either murdered or drowned." Yet neither could all this procure any assistance from him, as he was at that time engaged in most dangerous wars with Bledla and Attila, kings of the Huns. And though, the year before this, Bledla had been murdered by the treachery of his brother Attila, yet Attila himself remained so intolerable an enemy to the Republic, that he ravaged almost all Europe, invading and destroying cities and castles. At the same time there was a famine at Constantinople, and shortly after, a plague followed, and a great part of the walls of that city, with fifty-seven towers, fell to the ground. Many cities also went to ruin, and the famine and pestilential state of the air destroyed many thousands of men and cattle.

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CHAP. XIV. [A.D. 446.] THE BRITONS, COMPELLED BY A REMARKABLE FAMINE, DROVE THE BARBARIANS OUT OF THEIR TERRITORIES; SOON AFTER THERE ENSUED PLENTY OF CORN, LUXURY, PLAGUE, AND THE SUBVERSION OE THE NATION.

§ 33. IN the meantime, the aforesaid famine distressing the Britons more and more, and leaving to posterity lasting memorials of its mischievous effects, obliged many of them to submit themselves to the depredators; though others still held out, confiding in the Divine assistance, when none was to be had from men. These continually made incursions from the mountains, caves, and woods, and, at length, began to inflict severe losses on their enemies, who had been for so many years plundering the country. The bold Irish robbers thereupon returned home, in order to come again soon after. The Picts, both then and afterwards, remained quiet in the farthest part of the island, save that sometimes they would do some mischief, and carry off booty from the Britons.

§ 34. When, however, the ravages of the enemy at length ceased, the island began to abound with such plenty of grain as had never been known in any age before; with plenty, luxury increased, and this was immediately attended with all sorts of crimes; in particular, cruelty, hatred of truth, and love of falsehood; insomuch, that if any one among them happened to be milder than the rest, and at all inclined to the truth, all the rest abhorred and persecuted him, as if he had been the overthrower of Britain. Nor were the laity alone guilty of these things, but even our Lord's own flock, and his pastors also, addicting themselves to drunkenness, animosity, litigiousness, contention, envy, and other such like crimes, cast off the light yoke of Christ. In the meantime, on a sudden, a severe plague fell upon that corrupt generation, which soon destroyed such numbers of them, that the living were scarcely sufficient to bury the dead: yet those that survived could not be withdrawn from the spiritual death which their sins had incurred, either by the death of their friends, or the fear of their own. Whereupon, not long after, a more severe vengeance, for their horrid wickedness, fell upon the sinful nation. They consulted what should be done, and where they should seek assistance to prevent or repel the cruel and frequent incursions of the northern nations; and they all agreed

with their King Vurtigern to call over to their aid, from the parts beyond the sea, the Saxon nation;[1] which, as the event still more evidently showed, appears to have been done by the appointment of our Lord himself, that evil might fall upon them for their wicked deeds.

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CHAP. XV. [A.D. 449.]—THE ANGLES, BEING INVITED INTO BRITAIN, AT FIRST OBLIGED THE ENEMY TO RETIRE; BUT NOT LONG AFTER, JOINING IN LEAGUE WITH THEM, THEY TURNED THEIR WEAPONS UPON THEIR CONFEDERATES.

§ 35. In the year of our Lord's Incarnation 449, Martian being made emperor with Valentinian, and the forty-sixth from Augustus, ruled the empire seven years. Then the nation of the Angles, or Saxons, being invited by the aforesaid king, arrived in Britain, with three long ships, and had a place assigned them to reside in, by the same king, in the eastern part of the island, that they might thus appear to be fighting for the country, whilst their real intentions were to enslave it. Accordingly, they engaged with the enemy, who had come from the north to give battle, and obtained the victory; which, being known at home in their own country, as also the fertility of the country, and the cowardice of the Britons, a more considerable fleet was quickly sent over, bringing a still greater number of men, which, being added to the former, made up an invincible army. The new comers received from the Britons a place to inhabit among themselves, upon condition that they should wage war against their enemies, for the peace and security of the country, whilst the Britons agreed to furnish them with pay.

§ 36. Those who came over were of the three most powerful nations of Germany, that is, of the Saxons, the Angles, and the Jutes. From the Jutes[2] are descended the people of Kent, and of the Isle of Wight, and those also in the province of the West Saxons, who are to this day called Jutes, seated opposite to the Isle of Wight. From the Saxons,[3] that is, the country which is now called Old Saxony, came the East-Saxons, the South-Saxons, and the West-Saxons. From the Angles,[4] that is, the country which is called "Angulus," and which is said, from that time, to remain desert to this day, between the provinces of the Jutes and the Saxons, are descended the East-Angles, the Midland-Angles, Mercians, all the race of the Northumbrians, that is, of those tribes that dwell on the north side of the river Humber, and the other nations of the English. The two first commanders are said to have been Hengist[5] and Horsa; of whom Horsa, being afterwards slain in battle by the Britons, was buried in the eastern parts of Kent, where a monument,[6] bearing his name, is still in existence. They were the sons of Victgils, son of Vitta, whose father was Vecta,

[1] There seems reason to believe that the Saxons did not arrive in one body at one time, but that their incursions extended over a considerable period. Hence we may possibly obtain a solution to the want of consistency in the calculation of dates counting onwards from that event. The instructive note of Lappenberg, i. 62, 63, may be consulted with advantage.

[2] See Lappenberg, i. 96. [3] Id. pp. 88, 89. [4] Id. p. 90. [5] Id. p. 78.

[6] The local tradition of the county ascribes this to Horstead, in Kent. Camd. Brit. col. 230; Hasted's Kent, c. 177.

son of Woden; from whose stock the royal race of many provinces deduce their original.

§ 37. In a short time, swarms of the aforesaid nations came over into the island, and they began to increase so much, that they became terrible to the natives themselves who had invited them. Then, having on a sudden entered into a temporary league with the Picts, whom they had by this time repelled to a distance by the force of their arms, they began to turn their weapons against their confederates. At first, they obliged them to furnish a greater quantity of provisions; and, seeking an occasion to quarrel, protested, that unless more plentiful supplies were brought them, they would break the confederacy, and ravage all the island. Nor were they at all backward in putting their threats in execution. In short, the fire kindled by the hands of these pagans proved God's just revenge for the crimes of the people; not unlike that which, being once lighted by the Chaldeans, consumed the walls and the whole city of Jerusalem. For the barbarous conquerors acting here in the same manner, or rather the just Judge ordaining that they should so act, they plundered all the neighbouring cities and country, spread the conflagration from the eastern to the western sea, without any opposition, and covered almost every part of the devoted island. Public as well as private structures were overturned; the priests were everywhere slain before the altars; prelates and people, without any respect of persons, were destroyed with fire and sword; nor was there any to bury those who had been thus cruelly slaughtered. Some of the miserable remainder, being taken in the mountains, were butchered in heaps. Others, spent with hunger, came forth and submitted themselves to the enemy for food, being destined to undergo perpetual servitude, if they were not killed even upon the spot. Some, with sorrowful hearts, fled beyond the seas.[1] Others, continuing in their own country, led a miserable life among the woods, rocks, and cliffs, with scarcely enough food to support life, and expecting every moment to be their last.

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### Chap. XVI. [A.D. 466.]—The Britons obtained their first victory over the Angles, under the command of Ambrosius, a Roman.

§ 38. When the victorious army, having destroyed and dispersed the natives, had returned home to their own settlements, the Britons began by degrees to take heart, and gather strength, sallying out of the lurking places in which they had concealed themselves, and unanimously imploring the Divine assistance, that they might not utterly be destroyed. They had at that time for their leader, Ambrosius Aurelius,[2] a modest man, who alone, probably, of the Roman nation, had survived the storm in which his parents, who were of the royal race, had perished. Under him the Britons revived, and offering battle to the victors, by the help of God, came off victorious. From that day, sometimes the natives,

[1] The largest body of these fugitives found shelter in Armorica, concerning the colonization of which by the Britons, see Ussher, p. 224; Pagi, A.D. 460, § 9, 10.

[2] See Lappenb. i. 101.

and sometimes their enemies prevailed, till the year of the siege of "Mons Badonicus,"[1] when they made no small slaughter of those invaders, about forty-four years after their arrival in England. But of this hereafter.[2]

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CHAP. XVII.[3] [A.D. 429.]—HOW GERMANUS, THE BISHOP, SAILING INTO BRITAIN WITH LUPUS, FIRST QUELLED THE TEMPEST OF THE SEA, AND AFTERWARDS THAT OF THE PELAGIANS, BY DIVINE POWER.

§ 39. SOME[4] few years before their arrival, the Pelagian heresy, brought over by Agricola, the son of Severianus, a bishop, had sadly corrupted the faith of the Britons. But whereas they absolutely refused to embrace that perverse doctrine, so blasphemous against the grace of Christ, and were not able of themselves to confute its subtilty by force of argument, they thought of an excellent plan, and that was that they should crave aid of the Gallican prelates in that spiritual war. Hereupon, having gathered a great synod,[5] they consulted together what persons should be sent thither for the aid of the faith, and by unanimous consent, choice was made of the apostolical priests, Germanus, bishop of Auxerre,[6] and Lupus of Troyes, to go into Britain to confirm it in the faith respecting the doctrine of God's grace. With prompt devotion they complied with the request and commands of the holy church, and putting to sea, sailed half way over from Gaul to Britain with a fair wind, and in safety. Then, on a sudden, they were obstructed in their way by the malevolence of demons, who were jealous that such men should be sent to bring back the Britons to the faith. They raised storms, and darkened the sky and the light with clouds. The sails could not bear the fury of the winds, the sailors' skill was forced to give way, the ship was sustained by prayer, not by strength, and as it happened, their spiritual commander and bishop, being spent with weariness, had fallen asleep. Then the tempest, as if the person that opposed it had given way, gathered strength, and the ship, overpowered by the waves, was ready to sink. Then the blessed Lupus and all the rest in their distress awakened their elder, that he might oppose himself to the raging elements. He, showing himself the more resolute in proportion to the greatness of the danger, called upon Christ, and having, in the name of the Holy Trinity, sprinkled a little water, he quelled the raging waves, admonished his companion, encouraged all, and all with one mouth fell to prayer. The Deity heard their cry, the enemies were put to

[1] Concerning the locality, see Camden, Brit. col. 89. Beda here copying Gildas, § 26, has misunderstood that writer, and placed the battle in the forty-fourth year after the arrival of the Saxons, *i.e.* in 492. The true date is that, probably, which is mentioned in the Annales Cambriæ, A.D. 516. See Petrie, p. 830. The question is fully examined by Pagi, A.D. 494, § 12.

[2] See § 50.

[3] The chapters from xvii. to xxi. inclusive, are borrowed, with some few alterations, from a life of Germanus, written within forty years of his death, by Constantius Lugdunensis. See Act. Sanctor. Jul. tom. vii. p. 213.

[4] The date, A.D. 429, is supported by the authority of Ussher, Pagi, Lappenberg, and others.

[5] Probably, according to Labbe, at Troyes, in 429. Concil. iii. 1508.

[6] Germanus, bishop of Auxerre, was born about 378, and died in 448. Lupus, bishop of Troyes, was born about 383, and died 29 July, 479.

flight, a calm ensued, the winds veering about applied themselves to forward their voyage, and having soon traversed the ocean, they enjoyed the quiet of the wished-for shore. A multitude flocking thither from all parts, received the priests, whose coming had been foretold by the predictions even of their adversaries. For the wicked spirits declared what they feared, and when the priests afterwards expelled them from the bodies they had taken possession of, they made known the nature of the tempest, and the dangers they had occasioned, nor did they deny that they had been overcome by the merits and authority of the saints.

§ 40. In the meantime the apostolical priests speedily filled the island of Britain with their fame, their preaching and their miracles; and the word of God was by them daily preached, not only in the churches, but even in the streets and fields, so that the faithful Catholics were everywhere confirmed, and those who had gone astray were corrected. Like the apostles, they had honour and authority through a good conscience, obedience to their doctrine through their sound learning, whilst the reward of miracles attended upon their numerous merits. Thus the generality of the people readily embraced their opinions; the authors of the erroneous doctrines kept themselves in the back-ground, and, like evil spirits, grieved for the loss of the people that were rescued from them. At length, after mature deliberation, they had the boldness to enter the lists, and appeared for public disputation. They present themselves, conspicuous for riches, glittering in apparel, and supported by the flatteries of many; choosing rather to hazard the danger of the combat,[1] than to undergo the dishonour among the people of having been silenced, lest they should seem to condemn themselves by their own silence. An immense multitude was there assembled with their wives and children. The people stood round, at once the spectators and the future judges; but the parties present differed much in appearance; on the one side was Divine faith, on the other human presumption; on the one side piety, on the other pride; on the one side Pelagius, on the other Christ. The holy priests, Germanus and Lupus, permitted their adversaries to speak first, who took up much time, and filled the ears with empty words. Then the venerable prelates poured forth the torrent of their apostolical and evangelical eloquence. Their discourse was interspersed with scriptural sentences, and they supported their most weighty assertions by reading the written testimonies of writers. Vanity was convinced, and perfidiousness confuted; so that at every objection made against them, not being able to reply, they confessed their errors. The people, who were judges, could scarcely refrain from violence, but signified their judgment by their acclamations.

[1] See Camden's Brit. col. 353, for the locality of this dispute.

CHAP. XVIII. [A.D. 429.]—THE SAME GERMANUS GAVE SIGHT TO THE BLIND DAUGHTER OF A TRIBUNE, AND THEN COMING TO ST. ALBAN'S, THERE RECEIVED SOME OF HIS RELICS, AND LEFT OTHERS OF THE BLESSED APOSTLES, AND OTHER MARTYRS.

§ 41. AFTER this, a certain man, who had the quality of a tribune, came forward with his wife, and presented his blind daughter, ten years of age, for the priests to cure. They ordered her to be set before their adversaries, who, being convinced by guilt of conscience, joined their entreaties to those of the child's parents, and besought the priests that the girl might be cured. The priests, therefore, perceiving their adversaries to yield, made a short prayer, and then Germanus, full of the Holy Ghost, invoked the Trinity, and taking into his hands a casket with relics of saints, which hung about his neck, applied it to the girl's eyes, which were immediately delivered from darkness and filled with the light of truth. The parents rejoiced, and the people were astonished at the miracle; after which, the wicked opinions were so fully obliterated from the minds of all, that they ardently embraced the doctrine of the priests.

§ 42. This damnable heresy being thus suppressed, and the authors thereof confuted, and all the people's hearts settled in the purity of the faith, the priests repaired to the tomb of the martyr, St. Alban, to give thanks to God through him. There Germanus, having with him relics of all the apostles, and of several martyrs, after offering up his prayers, commanded the tomb to be opened, that he might lay up therein some precious gifts; judging it convenient, that the limbs of saints brought together from several countries, as their equal merits had procured them admission into heaven, should be preserved in one tomb. These being honourably deposited, and laid together, he took up a parcel of dust from the place[1] where the martyr's blood had been shed, to carry away with him; which dust having retained the blood, it appeared that the slaughter of the martyrs had communicated a redness to it, whilst the persecutor was struck pale. In consequence of these things, an innumerable multitude of people was that day converted to the Lord.

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CHAP. XIX. [A.D. 429.]—HOW THE SAME HOLY MAN, BEING DETAINED THERE BY AN INDISPOSITION, BY HIS PRAYERS QUENCHED A FIRE THAT HAD BROKEN OUT AMONG THE HOUSES, AND WAS HIMSELF CURED OF A DISTEMPER BY A VISION.

§ 43. As they were returning from thence, Germanus fell into a hidden pitfall, and broke his leg, by the contrivance of the devil, who did not know that, like Job, his merits would be enhanced by the affliction of his body. Whilst he was thus necessarily detained some time in the same place by illness, a fire broke out in a cottage neighbouring to that in which he was; and having burned down the other houses, which were thatched with reed, was carried on by the wind to the dwelling in which he lay. The people all flocked to the prelate, entreating that they might lift him in their arms, and

[1] Germanus built a church in Auxerre, which he dedicated to St. Alban, and there he deposited these relics. See Mirac. S. Germani auctore Herico, § 17, Act. SS. mens. Julii, vii. 258.

save him from the impending danger. He, however, rebuked them, and relying on faith, would not suffer himself to be removed. The multitude, in despair, ran to oppose the conflagration; however, for the greater manifestation of the Divine power, whatsoever the crowd endeavoured to save, was destroyed; but what he who was disabled and motionless protected, the flame avoided, sparing the house that gave entertainment to the holy man, and raging about on every side of it; whilst the house in which he lay appeared untouched, amid the general conflagration. The multitude rejoiced at the miracle, and praised the superior power of God. An infinite number of the poorer sort watched day and night before the cottage; some to heal their souls, and some their bodies. It is impossible to relate what Christ wrought by his servant, what wonders the sick man performed: for whilst he would suffer no medicines to be applied to his own distemper, he one night saw a person, in garments as white as snow, standing by him, who, reaching out his hand, seemed to raise him up, and ordered him to stand boldly upon his feet; from which time his pain ceased, and he was so perfectly restored, that when the day came on, he, without any hesitation, set forth upon his journey.

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### Chap. XX. [A.D. 429.]—How the same Bishops procured for the Britons assistance from Heaven in a battle, and then returned home.

§ 44. In the meantime, the Saxons[1] and Picts, with their united forces, made war upon the Britons, who, being thus by fear and necessity mutually compelled to take up arms, and thinking themselves unequal to their enemies, implored the assistance of the holy bishops; who, hastening to them as they had promised, inspired so much courage into these fearful people, that one would have thought they had been joined by a mighty army. Thus, these holy apostolic men being leaders, Christ Himself commanded in their camp. The holy days of Lent were also at hand, and were rendered more religious by the presence of the priests, insomuch that the people being everywhere instructed by daily sermons, resorted in crowds to the grace of baptism; for most of the army desired admission to the saving water; a church was prepared with boughs for the feast of the Resurrection of our Lord, and so fitted up in that martial camp, as if it were in a city. The army advanced, still wet with the baptismal water; the faith of the people was strengthened; and human power being despised, the Divine assistance was now relied upon.

§ 45. The enemy received advice of the state and position of the army, and not questioning their success against an unarmed multitude, hastened forwards, but their approach was, by the scouts, made known to the Britons; the greater part of whose forces being just come from the font, after the celebration of Easter, and preparing to arm and carry on the war, Germanus declared he would

[1] We here learn, that long before the period usually assigned for the invasion of England by the Saxons, that nation had acquired a footing in this island. See Pagi, A. D. 429, § 8; and Lappenb. i. 62, note.

be their leader to the battle. He picked out some light-armed troops, viewed the country round about, and observing in the way by which the enemy was expected, a valley encompassed with hills,[1] in that place he drew up his new army, himself acting as their general. A multitude of fierce enemies presently appeared, whom as soon as those that lay in ambush saw approaching, Germanus, bearing in his hands the standard, instructed his men all in a loud voice to repeat his words, and the enemy advancing securely, as thinking to take them by surprise, the priests three times cried, Hallelujah.[2] A universal shout of the same word followed, and the clefts of the hills resounding the echo on all sides, the enemy was struck with dread, fearing, that not only the neighbouring rocks, but even the very skies, were falling upon them; and such was their terror, that their feet were not swift enough to deliver them from it. They everywhere fled in disorder, casting away their arms, and well satisfied if, with their naked bodies, they could escape the danger; many of them, in their precipitate and hasty flight, were swallowed up by the river which they were passing. The Britons, without the loss of a man, beheld their vengeance complete, and became inactive spectators of their victory. The scattered spoils were gathered up, and the pious soldiers rejoiced in the success which Heaven had granted them.

§ 46. The prelates thus triumphed over the defeated enemy without bloodshed, and gained a victory by faith, without the aid of human force. Thus having settled the affairs of the island, and restored tranquillity by the defeat, as well of the invisible as of the carnal enemies, the bishops prepared to return home. Their own merits, and the intercession of the holy martyr Alban, obtained for them a safe passage, and the happy vessel restored them in peace to their own people.

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CHAP. XXI. [A.D. 447 ?]—THE PELAGIAN HERESY AGAIN REVIVING, GERMANUS, RETURNING INTO BRITAIN WITH SEVERUS, FIRST HEALED A LAME YOUTH, THEN HAVING CONDEMNED OR CONVERTED THE HERETICS, THEY RESTORED SPIRITUAL HEALTH TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

§ 47. NOT long[3] after, advice was brought from the same island, that certain persons were again attempting to set forth and spread abroad the Pelagian heresy. The holy Germanus was once more entreated by all the priests, that he would again defend the cause of God, which he had before asserted. He speedily complied with their request; and taking with him Severus, a man of singular sanctity, who was disciple to the most holy father, Lupus, bishop

[1] According to Ussher, p. 179, at Mold, in Flintshire, near which place is Maes-Garmon, or German's Field. See also, Camd. Brit. col. 826.

[2] Gregory the Great, whose thoughts had long been directed to the state of religion in England, evidently refers to this victory in his Commentary upon the book of Job, xxvii. cap. 6 (Opp. i. 779, ed. 1675). Beda, H. E. ii. 1, and others after him, suppose that in this passage he alluded to the conversion of the Saxons under S. Augustine; but this event had not occurred when Gregory wrote his Exposition upon Job.

[3] This second mission took place in 446 or 447.

of Troyes, and at that time, having been ordained bishop of Treves, was preaching the word of God to the tribes of "Germania Prima," he put to sea, and was calmly wafted over into Britain.

§ 48. In the meantime, the wicked spirits flying about the whole island, foretold by unwilling prophecies that Germanus was coming; insomuch, that one Elafius, a chief of that region, hastened to meet the holy men, without having received any certain news, carrying with him his son, who laboured under a lamentable weakness of his limbs while in the very flower of his youth; for the nerves being withered, his leg was so contracted that the limb was useless, and he could not walk. All the country followed this Elafius. The priests arrived, and were met by the ignorant multitude, whom they forthwith blessed, and preached the word of God to them. They found the people constant to the faith in which they had left them; and learning that but few had gone astray, they found out the authors, and condemned them. Then Elafius suddenly cast himself at the feet of the priests, presenting his son, whose distress was visible, and needed no prayers to express it. All were grieved, but especially the priests, who offered their prayers for him before the throne of mercy; and Germanus, at once causing the youth to sit down, gently passed his healing hand over the leg which was contracted; the limb recovered its strength and soundness by the power of his touch, the withered nerves were restored, and the youth was, in the presence of all the people, delivered whole to his father. The multitude was amazed at the miracle, and the catholic faith was firmly implanted in the minds of all; after which, they were, in a sermon, warned and exhorted to make amends for their error. By the judgment of all, the originators of the heresy, who had been expelled the island, were brought before the priests, to be conveyed into the continent, that the country might be rid of them, and they corrected of their errors. Thus the faith in those parts continued long after pure and untainted.

§ 49. All things being settled, the blessed prelates returned home as prosperously as they came. But Germanus, after this, went to Ravenna, to intercede for the tranquillity of the Armoricans, where, being very honourably received by Valentinian and his mother, Placidia, he departed[1] to Christ; his body was conveyed to his own city with a splendid retinue, and numberless miracles accompanied him to the grave. Not long after, Valentinian was murdered by the followers of Aëtius, the Patrician, whom he had put to death, in the sixth year of the reign of Martian, and with him ended the empire of the West.

[1] At whatever time the second expedition of Germanus began, it certainly terminated in 447, or early in 448, for he died in Italy on 31 July in that year.

CHAP. XXII. [A.D. 447 ?]—THE BRITONS, BEING FOR A TIME DELIVERED FROM FOREIGN INVASIONS, WASTED THEMSELVES BY CIVIL WARS, AND THEN GAVE THEMSELVES UP TO MORE HEINOUS CRIMES.

§ 50. In the meantime, in Britain[1] there was some little respite from foreign but not from civil wars. There still remained the ruins of cities destroyed by the enemy, and abandoned; and the natives, who had escaped the enemy, now fought against each other. However, the kings, priests, private men, and the nobility, still remembering the late calamities and slaughters, in some measure each kept within their own bounds; but when these died, and another generation succeeded, which knew nothing of those times, and was only acquainted with the present peaceable state of things, all the bonds of truth and justice were so entirely broken up and overthrown, that there was not only no trace of them remaining, but very few persons seemed to be aware that such virtues had ever existed. Among other most wicked actions, not to be expressed, which their own historian, Gildus, mournfully takes notice of, they added this—that they never preached the faith to the Saxons, or English, who dwelt amongst them. The goodness of God, however, did not forsake his people, whom he foreknew, but sent to the aforesaid nation much more worthy preachers, to convert it to the faith.

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CHAP. XXIII. [A.D. 582.]—HOW POPE GREGORY SENT AUGUSTINE, WITH OTHER MONKS, TO PREACH TO THE ENGLISH NATION, AND ENCOURAGED THEM BY A LETTER OF EXHORTATION, NOT TO CEASE FROM THEIR LABOUR.

§ 51. In the year of our Lord 582, Mauritius, the fifty-fourth from Augustus, ascended the throne, and reigned twenty-one years. In the tenth year of his reign, [A.D. 592,] Gregory, a man renowned for learning and activity, was promoted to the apostolical see of Rome, and presided over it thirteen years, six months, and ten days. He, being moved by Divine inspiration, in the fourteenth year of the same emperor, and about the one hundred and fiftieth after the coming of the Angles into Britain, sent the servant of God, Augustine, and with him several other monks, who feared the Lord, to preach the word of God to the English nation. They having, in obedience to the pope's commands, undertaken that work, when they had advanced a short way on their journey,[2] were seized with a sluggish fear, and began to think of returning home, rather than proceed to a barbarous, fierce, and unbelieving nation, to whose very language they were strangers; and this they unanimously agreed was the safest course. In short, they sent back Augustine, who had been appointed to be consecrated bishop in case they were received by the English, that he might, by humble entreaty, obtain of the holy Gregory, that they should not be compelled to undertake so dangerous, toilsome, and uncertain a journey. The pope, in reply, sent them a hortatory epistle, persuading them

[1] On the state of Britain immediately after the departure of the Romans, see Lappenb. i. 66.

[2] On the route of the missionaries through France, see Mabillon, Annal. Bened. A.D. 596, § 34.

to proceed in the work of the Divine word, and rely on the assistance of the Almighty; the purport of which letter was as follows:—

§ 52. "*Gregory, the servant of the servants of God, to the servants of our Lord.* Forasmuch as it were better not to begin a good work, than to think of desisting from that which has been begun, it behoves you, my beloved sons, to accomplish the good work, which, by the help of our Lord, you have undertaken. Let not, therefore, the toil of the journey, nor the tongues of evil-speaking men, deter you; but with all possible earnestness and zeal perform that which, by God's direction, you have undertaken; being assured, that much labour is followed by greater eternal reward. When Augustine, your provost, returns, (whom we also have constituted your abbat,) humbly obey him in all things; knowing, that whatsoever you shall do by his direction, will, in all respects, be profitable to your souls. May Almighty God protect you with his grace, and grant that I may, in the heavenly country, see the fruits of your labour; inasmuch as, though I cannot toil with you, I may partake in the joy of the reward, because I am willing to labour. God keep you in safety, my most beloved sons. Dated[1] the 10th of the kalends of August, [23d of July,] in the fourteenth year of the reign of our pious and most august lord, Mauritius Tiberius, the thirteenth year after the consulship of our said lord; in the fourteenth indiction."

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CHAP. XXIV. [A.D. 596.]—HOW HE WROTE TO THE BISHOP OF ARLES TO ENTERTAIN THEM.

§ 53. THE same venerable pope also sent a letter to Ætherius,[2] bishop of Arles, exhorting him to give favourable entertainment to Augustine on his way to Britain; which letter was in these words:—

"*To his most reverend and holy brother and fellow-bishop Ætherius, Gregory, the servant of the servants of God.* Although religious men stand in need of no recommendation to those priests who have the charity which is pleasing to God; yet as a proper opportunity is offered me to write, we have thought fit to send you this our letter, to inform you that we have directed thither, for the good of souls, the bearer of these presents, Augustine, the servant of God, of whose industry we are assured, with other servants of God, whom it is requisite that your holiness should assist with priestly affection, and afford him all the comfort in your power. And to the end that you may be the more ready to render him assistance, we have enjoined him to inform you particularly of the occasion of his coming; knowing that, when you are acquainted with it, you will, as the matter requires, for the sake of God, zealously afford

[1] A vindication of the chronological accuracy of Beda at this point, may be seen in Pagi, A.D. 596, § 4.

[2] An error has here crept into Beda's narrative, (arising, probably, from the inaccuracy of the extracts made by Nothelm from the papal registers;) for Virgilius was at this time bishop of Arles, and not Ætherius. The subject is examined at considerable length by Pagi, A.D. 596, § 5.

him your relief. We also in all things recommend to your charity, Candidus,[1] the priest, our common son, whom we have transferred to the government of a small patrimony in our church. God keep you in safety, most reverend brother. Dated the 10th of the kalends of August, [23d of July,] in the fourteenth year of the reign of our most pious and august lord, Mauritius Tiberius, the thirteenth year after the consulship of our lord aforesaid; in the fourteenth indiction."

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CHAP. XXV. [A.D. 597.]—AUGUSTINE, COMING INTO BRITAIN, FIRST PREACHED IN THE ISLE OF THANET TO THE KING OF KENT, AND SO, HAVING OBTAINED LICENCE FROM HIM, ENTERED THE KINGDOM OF KENT, IN ORDER TO PREACH THEREIN.

§ 54. AUGUSTINE, thus strengthened by the confirmation of the blessed father Gregory, returned to the work of the word of God, with the servants of Christ who were with him, and arrived in Britain. The most powerful Ædilberct[2] was at that time king in Kent; he had extended the boundaries of his dominions as far as to the great river Humber, by which the people of the southern Angles are divided from the northern. On the east of Kent is Thanet,[3] a considerable island, containing, according to the English custom of reckoning, 600 families, divided from the main land by the river Vantsumu, which is about three furlongs in breadth, and fordable only in two places, for both ends of it run into the sea. In this island landed[4] the servant of our Lord, Augustine, and his companions, being, as is reported, nearly forty men. They had, by order of the blessed pope Gregory, taken interpreters of the nation of the Franks, and sending to Ædilberct, signified that they were come from Rome, and brought a joyful message, which most undoubtedly assured to all that took advantage of it the everlasting joys of heaven, and a kingdom that would never end, with the living and true God. The king having heard this, ordered them to stay in the island in which they had landed, and that they should be furnished with all necessaries, till he should consider what to do with them. For he had before heard of the christian religion, having a christian wife of the royal family of the Franks, called Bercta,[5] whom he had received from her parents upon condition that she should be permitted to retain her religion with the bishop Liudhard,[6] who was sent with her as an assistant to preserve her faith.

[1] Candidus was employed by Gregory in his laudable endeavours for the redemption of English slaves. A letter from him to Candidus upon the subject may be seen in Greg. Epist. lib. v. ep. 10, (Opp. ii. 653.) See, also, Mabill. Annal. Bened. A. D. 596, § 5.

[2] The reign of Ethelbert of Kent extended from 568 to 616.

[3] The island of Thanet is now divided from the rest of Kent by a narrow brook.

[4] At a place called Retesburgh, according to Thorne, (col. 1759.)

[5] Bertha was the daughter of Charibert, king of Paris, and queen Ingoberga, and is mentioned as such by Gregory of Tours, lib. ix. cap. 26. Gregory addresses her under the name of Adilberga. Ep. xi. 29, ed. Bened.

[6] See Acta Sanct. mens. Feb. tom. iii. p. 468. Thorne and Sprott, two early Kentish writers, call him bishop of Senlis, concerning his claims to which title see Gallia Christ. x. 1382.

§ 55. Some days after, the king came into the island, and sitting in the open air, ordered Augustine and his companions to be brought to him, that they might converse together. For he had taken precaution that they should not come to him in any house, lest, according to an ancient superstition, if they practised any magical arts, they might impose upon him, and so get the better of him. But they came furnished with divine, not with magic power, bearing a silver cross for their banner, and the image of our Lord and Saviour painted on a board; and singing Litanies, they offered up their prayers to the Lord for the eternal salvation both of themselves and of those to whom they had come. When they had sat down, pursuant to the king's commands, and preached to him and his attendants there present the word of life, the king answered thus:—"Your words and promises are very fair; but as they are new to us, and of uncertain import, I cannot approve of them so far as to forsake that which I have so long followed, with the whole English nation. But because you strangers are come from far into my kingdom, and, as I conceive, are desirous to impart to us those things which you believe to be true and most beneficial, we will not molest you, but rather give you favourable entertainment, and take care to supply you with your necessary sustenance; nor do we forbid you to preach and gain as many as you can to your religion." Accordingly he gave them a residence[1] in the city of Canterbury, which was the metropolis of all his dominions, and, pursuant to his promise, besides allowing them sustenance, did not refuse them liberty to preach. It is reported that, as they drew near to the city, after their manner, with the holy cross, and the image of our sovereign Lord and King, Jesus Christ, they, in concert, sang this Litany: "We beseech thee, O Lord, in thy great mercy, that thy anger and wrath be turned away from this city, and from thy holy house, because we have sinned. Hallelujah."

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CHAP. XXVI. [A.D. 597.]—ST. AUGUSTINE IN KENT FOLLOWED THE DOCTRINE AND MANNER OF LIVING OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH, AND RECEIVED HIS EPISCOPAL SEE IN THE ROYAL CITY.

§ 56. As soon as they had entered the dwelling-place assigned them, they began to imitate the course of life practised in the primitive church; applying themselves to frequent prayer, watching, and fasting; preaching the word of life to as many as they could; despising all worldly things, as not belonging to them; receiving only their necessary food from those whom they taught; themselves living in all respects conformably to what they prescribed to others, and being always disposed to suffer any adversity, and even to die, for that truth which they preached. In short, several believed and were baptized, admiring the simplicity of their innocent life, and the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine. There was, near the east side

[1] Thorne, apparently from local tradition, says that they were domiciled in the parish of S. Alphege, at a place called Stablegate. See Decem. Scriptt. col. 1759.

of the city, an ancient church dedicated to the honour of St. Martin,[1] built whilst the Romans were still in the island, wherein the queen, who, as has been said before, was a Christian, used to pray. In this they first began to meet, to sing, to pray, to say mass, to preach, and to baptize, till the king, being converted to the faith, allowed them to preach more openly, and to build or repair churches in all places.

§ 57. When the king, among the rest, induced by the unspotted life of these holy men, and their delightful promises, (which they proved to be most certain, by many miracles,[2]) believed and was baptized, greater numbers[3] began daily to flock together to hear the word, and, forsaking their heathen rites, to associate themselves, by believing, to the unity of the church of Christ. Their faith and conversion the king is reported so far to have encouraged, as that he compelled none to embrace Christianity, but only showed more affection to the believers, as to his fellow-citizens in the heavenly kingdom. For he had learned from the instructors and leaders of his own salvation, that the service of Christ ought to be voluntary, not by compulsion. Nor was it long before he gave his teachers a settled residence[4] in his metropolis of Canterbury, consistent with their position, together with such possessions of different kinds as were necessary for their subsistence.

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CHAP. XXVII. [A.D. 597.]—ST. AUGUSTINE BEING MADE BISHOP, SENDS TO ACQUAINT POPE GREGORY WITH WHAT HAD BEEN DONE IN BRITAIN, AND RECEIVES HIS ANSWER TO THE NECESSARY DOUBTS HE HAD PROPOSED TO HIM.

§ 58. IN the meantime,[5] Augustine, the man of God, repaired to Arles, and, pursuant to the orders received from the holy father, Gregory, was ordained archbishop for the English nation, by Ætherius,[6] archbishop of that city. Then returning into Britain, he sent Laurentius the priest, and Peter the monk, to Rome, to acquaint

[1] The church of St. Martin is said to have been the seat of a suffragan bishop until the time of Lanfranc. See Hasted's Kent, iv. 497. The following extract from Mr. Cole's interesting "Handbook for Canterbury" is worthy our notice:—"The quantity of Roman bricks which may be detected throughout the structure, would certainly show that it was originally a Roman structure, or one built with Roman materials adapted from other purposes, as we see in many parts where we know the Romans to have been especially located. The church is a very small, oblong building, consisting of a chancel and nave, with a plain pointed roof, and a low square tower."—P. 66.

[2] The date of Ethelbert's baptism is uncertain. Ussher refers it to A.D. 599; but it appears that it took place at an earlier period, probably in 597. See Pagi, ad an. § 4.

[3] It appears from a letter addressed by Gregory to Eulogius, bishop of Alexandria, that previous to the Christmas of 597, more than ten thousand of the English had been baptized by Augustine and his disciples. Epp. viii. 30. Opp. ii. 918, ed. Bened.

[4] Several charters professing to be granted by Ethelbert to Augustine may be seen in the Cod. Diplom. Ævi Saxon. i. 2, 3, etc. They are marked by the editor as spurious.

[5] The date of Augustine's consecration at Arles is established by a comparison of Beda's text with the correspondence of Gregory, from which we learn that the ceremony was completed and the archbishop had returned to Kent before the Christmas of 597. See Pagi ad an. 597, § 4.

[6] The error pointed out at § 50 is here repeated.

pope Gregory, that the nation of the English had received the faith of Christ, and that he was himself made their bishop. At the same time, he desired his solution of some doubts that occurred to him. He soon received answers corresponding to his questions, which we have also thought fit to insert in this our history:—

§ 59. *The First Question of St. Augustine, Bishop of the Church of Canterbury.*—Concerning bishops, how are they to behave themselves towards their clergy? into how many portions are the things given by the faithful to the altar, to be divided? and how is the bishop to act in the church?

*Gregory, Pope of the City of Rome, answers.*—Holy writ, in which no doubt you are well versed, testifies, and particularly St. Paul's Epistle to Timothy, wherein he endeavours to instruct him how he should behave himself in the house of God, answers this question. But it is the custom of the apostolic see to prescribe rules to bishops newly ordained, that all emoluments which accrue, are to be divided into four portions;—one for the bishop and his family, because of hospitality and entertainments; another for the clergy; a third for the poor; and the fourth for the repair of churches. But in regard that you, my brother, being brought up under monastic rules, are not to live apart from your clergy in the English church, which, by God's assistance, has been lately brought to the faith; you are to follow that course of life which our forefathers did in the time of the primitive church, when none of them said anything that he possessed was his own, but all things were in common among them.

But if there are any clerks not received into holy orders, who cannot live continent, they are to take wives, and receive their stipends abroad; because we know it is written in the authorities abovementioned, that a distribution was made to each of them according to his wants. [Acts iv. 35.] Care is also to be taken of their stipends, and provision to be made, and they are to be kept under ecclesiastical rules, that they may live orderly, and attend to singing of psalms, and, by the help of God, preserve their hearts, and tongues, and bodies from all that is unlawful. But as for those that live in common, why need we say anything of assigning portions, or keeping hospitality and exhibiting mercy? inasmuch as all that can be spared is to be spent in pious and religious works, according to the commands of Him who is the Lord and Master of all, "Give alms of such things as you have, and behold all things are clean unto you." [Luke xi. 41.]

§ 60. *Augustine's Second Question.*—Whereas the faith is one and the same, are there different customs in different churches? and is one custom of masses observed in the holy Roman church, and another in the Gallican[1] church?

*Pope Gregory answers.*—You know, my brother, the custom of the Roman church in which you remember you were bred up.

[1] Augustine's attention had probably been directed to this question by finding that the Gallican Liturgy had been introduced into the church of St. Martin, at Canterbury, by Liudhard, the bishop who acted as chaplain to queen Bertha. We have no reason to suppose that the Gallican liturgy was ever introduced into England, or that Augustine so far availed himself of Gregory's permission as to frame a liturgy for the Saxon converts to Christianity.

But it pleases me, that if you have found anything, either in the Roman, or the Gallican, or any other church, which may be more acceptable to Almighty God, you carefully make choice of the same, and sedulously teach the church of the English, which as yet is new in the faith, whatsoever you can gather from the several churches. For things are not to be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things. Choose, therefore, from each church those things that are pious, religious, and correct, and when you have, as it were, made them up into one body, let the minds of the English be accustomed thereto.

§ 61. *Augustine's Third Question.*—I beseech you to inform me, what punishment must be inflicted, if any one shall take anything by stealth from the church?

*Gregory answers.*—You may judge, my brother, by the person of the thief, in what manner he is to be corrected. For there are some, who, having substance, commit theft; and there are others, who transgress in this point through want. Wherefore it is requisite, that some be punished by amercements, others with stripes; some with greater severity, and some more mildly. And when greater severity is used, it is to proceed from charity, not from passion; because this is done to him who is corrected, that he may not be delivered up to hell-fire. For it behoves us to maintain discipline among the faithful, as good parents do with their children after the flesh, whom they punish with stripes for their faults, and yet design to make those their heirs whom they chastise; and they preserve what they possess for those whom they seem in anger to persecute. This charity is, therefore, to be kept in view, and it dictates the measure of the punishment, so that the mind may do nothing beyond the rule of reason. You may add, that they ought to restore those things which they have stolen from the church. But, God forbid that the church should receive increase from those earthly things which it seems to lose, or seek gain out of such vanities.

§ 62. *Augustine's Fourth Question.*—Whether two brothers may marry two sisters, which are of a family far removed from themselves?

*Gregory answers.*—This may assuredly be done; for nothing is found in holy writ that seems to contradict it.

§ 63. *Augustine's Fifth Question.*—To what degree may the faithful marry with their kindred? and whether it is lawful for men to marry their stepmothers and cousins?

*Gregory answers.*—A certain worldly [1] law in the Roman commonwealth allows, that the son and daughter of a brother and sister, or of two brothers, or two sisters, may be joined in matrimony; but we have found, by experience, that the offspring of such wedlock cannot thrive; and the Divine Law forbids a man to "uncover the nakedness of his kindred." [Levit. xviii. 6, 7.] Hence of necessity they must be of the third or fourth generation of the faithful, that can be lawfully joined in matrimony; for the second, which we have

[1] Gregory here clearly means lib. i. tit. 10 of Justinian's Code, which permits cousins-german to marry.

mentioned, must altogether abstain from one another. To marry with one's mother-in-law is a heinous crime, because it is written in the Law, "Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father:" now the son, indeed, cannot uncover his father's nakedness; but in regard that it is written, "They shall be two in one flesh," [Gen. ii. 24,] he that presumes to uncover the nakedness of his stepmother, who was one flesh with his father, certainly uncovers the nakedness of his father. It is also prohibited to marry with a sister-in-law, because by the former union she is become the brother's flesh. For which thing also John the Baptist was beheaded, and ended his life in holy martyrdom. For, though he was not ordered to deny Christ, and indeed was killed for confessing Christ, yet in regard that the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, said, "I am the Truth," because John was killed for the truth, he also shed his blood for Christ.

But forasmuch as there are many of the English, who, whilst they were still in infidelity, are said to have been joined in this execrable matrimony, they, when they come to the faith, are to be admonished to abstain from each other, and be made to know that this is a grievous sin. Let them fear the dreadful judgment of God, lest, for the gratification of their carnal appetites, they incur the torments of eternal punishment. Yet they are not on this account to be deprived of the communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, lest we should seem to revenge upon them those things which they did through ignorance, before they had received baptism. For at this time the Holy Church chastises some things through zeal, and tolerates others through meekness, and connives at some things through discretion, that so she may often, by this forbearance and connivance, suppress the evil which she disapproves. But all that come to the faith are to be admonished not to do such crimes. And if any shall be guilty of them, they are to be excluded from the communion of the Body and Blood of Christ. For as the offence is, in some measure, to be tolerated in those who do it through ignorance, so it is to be severely punished in those who do not fear to sin knowingly.

§ 64. *Augustine's Sixth Question.*—Whether a bishop may be ordained without other bishops being present, in case there be so great a distance between them that they cannot easily assemble?

*Gregory answers.*—As for the church of England, in which you are as yet the only bishop,[1] you can no otherwise ordain a bishop than in the absence of other bishops. When bishops come over from Gaul, they may be present as witnesses to you in ordaining a bishop. But we would have you, my brother, to ordain[2] bishops in such a manner that the said bishops may not be far asunder, that when a new bishop is to be ordained, there be no difficulty, but that other bishops, and pastors also, whose presence is necessary, may easily come together. Thus when, by the help of God, bishops shall be so constituted in places everywhere near to one

[1] We may infer from this passage that Lindhard had at this time returned to Gaul.

[2] The difficulties occasioned by this passage are examined by Johnson in his Collection of Laws and Canons, i. 72, ed. Oxf. 1850.

another, no ordination of a bishop is to be performed without assembling three or four bishops. For, even in spiritual affairs, we may take example by the temporal, that they may be wisely and discreetly conducted. It is certain, that when marriages are celebrated in the world, some married persons are assembled, that those who have preceded in the way of matrimony may also partake in the joy of the succeeding couple. Why, then, at this spiritual ordination, wherein, by means of the sacred ministry, man is joined to God, should not such persons be assembled, as may either rejoice in the advancement of the new bishop, or jointly pour forth their prayers to Almighty God for his preservation?

§ 65. *Augustine's Seventh Question.*—How are we to deal with the bishops of France and Britain?

*Gregory answers.*—We give you no authority over the bishops of France, because the bishop of Arles received the pall in ancient times from my predecessor, and we are not to deprive him of the authority he has received. If it shall therefore happen, my brother, that you go over into the province of France, you are to treat with the said bishop of Arles, how, if there be any faults among the bishops, they may be amended; and if he shall be lukewarm in keeping up discipline, he thus be corrected by your zeal. To him we have also written, that when your holiness shall be in Gaul, he may also use all his endeavours to assist you, and restrain among the bishops all that shall be opposite to the command of our Creator. But you shall not, exceeding your own jurisdiction, have power to judge the bishops of France, but by persuading, soothing, and showing good works for them to imitate, you shall reform the minds of wicked men to the pursuit of holiness; for it is written in the Law, "When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbours, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbours' standing corn, but rub the ears of corn in thine hand and eat." [Deut. xxiii. 25.] For thou mayest not apply the sickle of judgment to that harvest which seems to have been committed to another; but by the love of good works thou shalt clear the Lord's wheat from the chaff of their vices, and convert them into the body of the Church by admonition and persuasion, as it were, by eating. But whatsoever is to be done by authority, must be transacted in conjunction with the aforesaid bishop of Arles, lest that should be omitted, which the ancient institution of the fathers has appointed. But as for all the bishops of Britain,[1] we commit them to your care, that the unlearned may be taught, the weak strengthened by persuasion, and the perverse corrected by authority.

§ 66. *Augustine's Eighth Question.*—Whether a woman with child ought to be baptized? Also, how long after she has brought forth, may she come into the church? Also, after how many days the infant may be baptized, lest he be prevented by death? Also, after how long may her husband have carnal knowledge of her?

[1] When the pope gave Augustine authority over all the bishops of Britain, it is probable that he meant this as a personal privilege which was to die with him. A letter afterwards cited, i. 29, expressly affirms this.

Also, whether it is lawful for her to come into the church when she has her courses? Also, to receive the holy sacrament of Communion? Also, whether a man, coming from his wife's bed, may come into the church before he has washed with water, or approach to receive the mystery of the holy Communion? All which things are requisite to be known by the rude nation of the English.

§ 67. *Gregory answers.*—I do not doubt but that these questions have been put by you, my brother, and I think I have already answered you therein. But I believe you wish that the opinion which you yourself might give, should be confirmed by my answer also.

Why should not a woman with child be baptized, since the fruitfulness of the flesh is no offence in the eyes of Almighty God? For when our first parents sinned in Paradise, they forfeited, by the just judgment of God, the immortality which they had received. Because, therefore, Almighty God would not for their fault wholly destroy the human race, he both deprived man of immortality for his sin, and, at the same time, of his great goodness, reserved to him the power of propagating his race after him. On what account, then, can that which is preserved to the human race, by the free gift of Almighty God, be excluded from the privilege of baptism? For it is very foolish to imagine that the gift of grace opposes that sacrament in which all sin is entirely blotted out. When a woman is delivered, after how many days she may come into the church, you have been informed by the injunction of the Old Testament, [Levit. xii. 4, 5,] viz. that she is to absent herself for a male child thirty-three days, and sixty-six for a female. Now you must know that this is to be taken in a mystery; for if she enters the church the very hour that she is delivered, to return thanks,[1] she is not guilty of any sin; because the lasciviousness of the flesh is in fault, and not the pain; but the pleasure is in the copulation of the flesh, whereas there is pain in bringing forth the child. Wherefore it is said to the first mother of all, "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children." [Gen. iii. 16.] If, therefore, we forbid a woman that has brought forth, to enter the church, we make a crime of her very punishment.

To baptize either a woman who has brought forth, if there be danger of death, even the very hour that she brings forth, or that which she has brought forth the very hour it is born, is no way prohibited, because, as the grace of the holy mystery is to be with much discretion provided for the living and understanding, so is it to be without any delay offered to those who are in imminent danger of death; lest, while a proper time is sought to confer the mystery of redemption, before the due season[2] arrive, the person that is to be redeemed is dead and gone.

§ 68. The husband is not to approach the wife, till the infant be

[1] This seems to imply some recognised form of thanksgiving suited to the occasion.

[2] In the early church baptism was usually administered only on the eves of Easter, Whitsunday, and Epiphany, (see Bingham, XI. vi. § 7,) a custom of the adherence to which in England during the Saxon times there is abundant proof.

weaned. A bad[1] custom is sprung up in the behaviour of married people, that is, that women disdain to suckle the children which they bring forth, and give them to other women to nurse; which seems to have been invented on no other account but incontinency; because, as they will not be continent, they will not suckle the children which they bear. Those women, therefore, who, from a bad custom, give out their children to others to nurse, must not approach their husbands till the time of purification is past. For even when there has been no child-birth, women are forbidden to do so, whilst they have their monthly courses, insomuch that the law [Levit. xviii. 19] condemns to death any man that shall approach unto a woman during her uncleanness. Yet the woman, nevertheless, must not be forbidden to come into the church whilst she has her monthly courses; because the superfluity of nature cannot be imputed to her as a crime; and it is not just that she should be refused admittance into the church, for that which she suffers against her will. For we know, that the woman who had the issue of blood, [Matt.ix. 20,] humbly approaching behind our Lord's back, touched the hem of his garment, and her distemper immediately departed from her. If, therefore, she that had an issue of blood was praised for touching the garment of our Lord, why may not she, who has the monthly courses, lawfully enter into the church of God? But you may say, her distemper compelled her, whereas these we speak of are bound by custom. Consider, then, most dear brother, that all which we suffer in this mortal flesh, through the infirmity of our nature, is ordained by the just judgment of God after the fall; for to hunger, to thirst, to be hot, to be cold, to be weary, is from the infirmity of our nature; and what else is it to seek food against hunger, drink against thirst, air against heat, clothes against cold, rest against weariness, than to procure a kind of remedy against distempers? Thus to a woman her monthly courses are a distemper. If, therefore, it were a commendable boldness in her, who in her disease touched our Lord's garment, why may not that which is allowed to one infirm person, be granted to all women, who, through the fault of their nature, are infirm?

She must not, therefore, be forbidden to receive the mystery of the holy Communion during those days. But if any one out of profound respect does not presume to receive it, she is to be commended; yet if she does receive it, she is not to be judged. For it is the part of noble minds in some manner to acknowledge their faults, even where there is no offence; because very often that is done without a fault, which, nevertheless, proceeded from a fault. Therefore, when we are hungry, it is no crime to eat; yet our being hungry proceeds from the sin of the first man. The monthly courses are no crime in women, because they naturally happen; however, because our nature itself is so depraved, that it appears to be so without the concurrence of the will, the fault proceeds from sin, and thereby human nature may herself acknowledge what she

[1] The Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum in the reign of Edward VI. condemns the practice of putting out children to nurse. De Matrimonio, c. xiii. p. 43. See Johnson's Canons, i. 77.

is become by judgment. And let mankind, who wilfully committed the offence, bear the guilt of that offence. And, therefore, let women consider with themselves, and if they do not presume, during their monthly courses, to approach the sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord, they are to be commended for their praiseworthy consideration; but when they are carried away by their love of the same mystery to receive it out of the usual custom of religious life, they are not to be restrained, as we said before. For as in the Old Testament the outward works are observed, so in the New Testament, that which is outwardly done, is not so diligently regarded as that which is inwardly thought, in order to punish it by a discerning judgment. For whereas the law forbids the eating of many things as unclean, yet our Lord says in the Gospel, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man." And presently after he added, expounding the same, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts." [Matt. xv. 11, 19.] Where it is sufficiently shown, that that is declared by Almighty God to be polluted in fact, which proceeds from the root of a polluted thought. Whence also Paul the Apostle says, "Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure." [Tit. i. 15.] And presently after, declaring the cause of that defilement, he adds, "For even their mind and conscience is defiled." If, therefore, meat is not unclean to him who has a clean mind, why shall that which a clean woman suffers according to nature, be imputed to her as uncleanness?

§ 69. A man who has approached his own wife is not to enter the church unless washed with water; nor is he to enter immediately, although washed. The Law [Lev. xv. 18] prescribed to the ancient people that a man in such cases should be washed with water, and not enter into the tabernacle before the setting of the sun. Which, nevertheless, may be understood spiritually, because a man lies with a woman when the mind is led by the imagination to unlawful concupiscence; for unless the fire of concupiscence be first driven from his mind, he is not to think himself worthy of the congregation of the brethren, whilst he thus indulges an unlawful passion. For though several nations have different opinions concerning this affair, and seem to observe different rules, it was always the custom of the Romans, from ancient times, that every man, after the performance of the conjugal act, should be cleansed by washing, and for some time respectfully to forbear entering the church. Nor do we, in so saying, hold matrimony to be a fault; but forasmuch as even lawful intercourse cannot be had without the consent of the flesh, it is proper to forbear entering the holy place, because the will itself cannot be without a fault. For he was not born of adultery or fornication, but of lawful marriage, who said, "Behold, I was conceived in iniquity, and in sin my mother brought me forth." [Ps. li. 2.] For he who knew himself to have been conceived in iniquity, lamented that he was born from sin, because the tree in its bough bears the moisture which it drew from the root. In which words, however, he does not call the union of the

married couple iniquity, but the pleasure of the copulation. For there are many things which are admitted to be lawful, and yet we are somewhat defiled in doing them. As very often by being angry we correct faults in others, and at the same time disturb our own peace of mind; and though that which we do is right, yet it is not to be approved that our mind should be herein discomposed. For he who said, "My eye was disturbed with anger," [Ps. vi. 7,] had been angry at the vices of those who had offended. Now, in regard that only a sedate mind can apply itself to contemplation, he grieved that his eye was disturbed with anger; because, whilst he was correcting evil actions below, he was obliged to be withdrawn and disturbed from the contemplation of the things which are above. Anger against vice is therefore commendable, and yet painful to a man, because he thinks that by the disturbance of his mind he has incurred some guilt. Lawful commerce, therefore, must be for the sake of children, not of pleasure; and must be to procure offspring, not to satisfy vices. But if any man is led towards his wife, not by the desire of pleasure, but only for the sake of getting children, such a man is certainly to be left to his own judgment, either as to entering the church, or as to receiving the mystery of the Body and Blood of our Lord; for he who, being placed in the fire, does not burn, is not to be forbidden by us to receive this sacrament. But when, not the love of getting children, but of pleasure prevails, the pair have cause to lament their deed. For this the holy preaching allows them, and yet fills the mind with dread of the very allowance. For when Paul the Apostle said, "Let him that cannot contain, have his wife," [1 Cor. vii. 9,] he presently took care to subjoin, "But this I say by way of indulgence, not by way of command." For that is not granted by way of indulgence which is lawful, because it is just; and, therefore, that which he said he indulged, he showed to be an offence.

It is seriously to be considered, that when God was to speak to the people on Mount Sinai, he first commanded them to abstain from women. [Exod. xix. 15.] And if so much cleanness of body was there required, where God spoke to the people by the means of a subjected creature, that those who were to hear the words of God should not associate with women; how much more ought women, who receive the Body of Almighty God, to preserve themselves in cleanness of flesh, lest they be burdened with the very greatness of that unutterable mystery? For this reason, it was said to David, concerning his men, by the priest, that if they were clean from women, they might receive the shewbread, which they would not have received at all, had not David first declared them to be clean. [1 Sam. xxi. 4.] When the man, who, after the conjugal act, has been washed with water, is also capable of receiving the mystery of the holy communion, then it is lawful for him, according to what has been before declared, to enter the church.

§ 70. *Augustine's Ninth Question.*—Whether, after an illusion, such as happens in a dream, any man may receive the Body of our Lord, or, if he be a priest, celebrate the Divine mysteries?

*Gregory answers.*—The Testament of the Old Law, as has been

said already in the article above, calls such a man polluted, and allows him not to enter into the church till the evening after being washed with water. Which, nevertheless, spiritual people, taking in another sense, will understand in the same manner as above; because he is imposed upon as it were in a dream, who, being tempted with filthiness, is defiled by real representations in thought, and he is to be washed with water, that he may cleanse away the sins of thought with tears; and unless the fire of temptation depart before, may know himself to be guilty as it were until the evening. But a very necessary distinction is to be made in that illusion, that one may carefully consider what causes it to happen in the mind of the person sleeping; for sometimes it proceeds from excess of eating or drinking, sometimes from the superfluity or infirmity of nature, and sometimes from the thoughts. And when it happens, either through superfluity or infirmity of nature, such an illusion is not to be feared, because it is rather to be lamented, that the mind of the person, who knew nothing of it, suffers the same, than that he occasioned it. But when the appetite of gluttony commits excess in food, and thereupon the receptacles of the humours are oppressed, the mind from thence contracts some guilt; yet not so much as to obstruct the receiving of the holy mysteries or celebrating mass, when a holy day requires it, or necessity obliges the sacrament to be administered, because there is no other priest in the place. For if there be others who can perform the ministry, the illusion proceeding from over-eating is not to exclude a man from receiving the sacred mystery; but I am of opinion he ought humbly to abstain from offering the sacrifice of the mystery; but not from receiving it, unless the mind of the person sleeping has been filled with some foul imagination. For there are some, who for the most part so suffer the illusion, that their mind, even during the sleep of the body, is not defiled with filthy thoughts. In which case, one thing is evident, that the mind is guilty even in its own judgment; for though it does not remember to have seen anything whilst the body was sleeping, yet it calls to mind that when waking it fell into bodily gluttony. But if the sleeping illusion proceeds from evil thoughts when waking, then the guilt is manifest to the mind; for the man perceives from whence that filth sprung; because what he had knowingly thought of, that he afterwards unwittingly suffered. But it is to be considered, whether that thought was no more than a suggestion, or proceeded to enjoyment, or, which is still more criminal, consented to sin. For all sin is fulfilled in three ways, viz. by suggestion, by delight, and by consent. Suggestion is occasioned by the devil, delight is from the flesh, and consent from the mind. For the serpent suggested the first offence, and Eve, as the flesh, was delighted with it, but Adam consented, as the spirit, or mind. And much discretion is requisite for the mind to sit as judge between suggestion and delight, and between delight and consent. For when the evil spirits suggest a sin to the mind, if there ensue no delight in the sin, the sin is in no way committed; but when the flesh begins to be delighted, then sin begins to be born. But if it deliberately consents, then the sin is known to be perfected.

The beginning, therefore, of sin is in the suggestion, the nourishing of it in the delight, but in the consent is its perfection. And it often happens that what the evil spirit sows in the thought, the flesh draws to delight, and yet the soul does not consent to that delight. And whereas the flesh cannot be delighted without the mind, yet the mind struggling against the pleasures of the flesh, is somewhat unwillingly tied down by the carnal delight, so that through reason it contradicts and does not consent, yet, being influenced by delight, it grievously laments its being so bound. Wherefore that principal soldier of our Lord's host, sighing, said, "I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members." [Rom. vii. 23.] Now if he was a captive, he did not fight; but if he did fight, how was he a captive? he therefore fought against the law of the mind, which the law that is in the members opposed; if he fought so, he was no captive. Thus, then, man is, as I may say, a captive and yet free. Free on account of justice, which he loves, a captive by the delight which he unwillingly bears within him.

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CHAP. XXVIII. [A.D.601.]—POPE GREGORY WRITES TO THE BISHOP OF ARLES TO ASSIST AUGUSTINE IN THE WORK OF GOD.

§ 71. THUS far the answers of the holy pope Gregory, to the questions of the most reverend prelate, Augustine. But the epistle,[1] which he says he had written to the bishop of Arles, was directed to Virgilius, successor to Aetherius; the copy whereof follows:—

"*To his most reverend and holy brother and fellow bishop, Virgilius; Gregory, servant of the servants of God.* With how much affection brethren, coming of their own accord, are to be entertained, is well known, by their being for the most part invited on account of charity. Therefore, if our common brother, bishop Augustine, shall happen to come to you, I desire you in your love will, as is becoming, receive him so kindly and affectionately, that he may be supported by the good of your consolation, and others may be informed how brotherly charity is to be cultivated. And, since it often happens that those who are at a distance, sooner than others, understand the things that need correction, if any crimes done by priests or others shall happen to be laid before you, you will, in conjunction with him, straitly inquire into the same. And do you both act so strictly and carefully against those things which offend God, and provoke his wrath, that for the amendment of others, the punishment may fall upon the guilty, and the innocent may not suffer an ill name. May God keep you in safety, most reverend brother. Dated on the 10th of the kalends of July, [the 22d of June,][2] in the nineteenth year of the reign of our pious and august emperor, Mauritius Tiberius, and the eighteenth year after the consulship of our said lord; in the fourth indiction."

[1] See Greg. Epist. lib. xi. ep. 68; Opp. ii. 1170, ed. Benedict.

[2] Upon the same day Gregory sent his letters to Brunchilda, queen of the Franks, requesting permission to send to her a papal legate to inquire into the conduct of certain Gallican priests, who were leading scandalous and improper lives. Lib. xi. ep. 69.

CHAP. XXIX. [A.D. 601.]—THE SAME POPE SENDS TO AUGUSTINE THE PALL, AN EPISTLE, AND SEVERAL MINISTERS OF THE WORD.

§ 72. MOREOVER, the same pope Gregory, hearing from bishop Augustine, that he had a great harvest, and but few labourers, sent to him, together with his aforesaid messengers, several fellow-labourers and ministers of the Word, of whom the first and principal were Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Rufinianus, and by them all things in general that were necessary for the worship and service of the church, viz. sacred vessels [1] and vestments for the altars, also ornaments for the churches, and vestments for the priests and clerks, as likewise relics of the holy apostles and martyrs; besides many books. He also sent letters,[2] wherein he signified that he had transmitted the pall to him, and at the same time directed how he should constitute bishops in Britain. The letters were in these words:—

§ 73. "*To his most reverend and holy brother and fellow bishop, Augustine; Gregory, the servant of the servants of God.* Since it is certain, that the unspeakable rewards of the eternal kingdom are reserved for those who labour for Almighty God, yet it is requisite that we bestow on them the advantage of honours, to the end that they may by this recompense be enabled the more vigorously to apply themselves to the care of their spiritual work. And, whereas the new church of the English is, through the goodness of the Lord, and your labours, brought to the grace of God, we grant you the use of the pall in the same, for the performance of the solemn service of the mass only; so that you in several places ordain twelve bishops,[3] who shall be subject to your jurisdiction, in such manner that the bishop of London shall, for the future, be always consecrated by his own synod, and that he receive the honour of the pall from this holy and apostolical see, which I, by the grace of God, now serve. But we will have you send to the city of York such a bishop as you shall think fit to ordain; yet so, that if that city, with the places adjoining, shall receive the word of God, that bishop shall also ordain twelve bishops, and enjoy the honour of a metropolitan; for we design, if we live, by the favour of God, to bestow on him also the pall; and yet we will have him to be subservient to your authority; but after your decease, he shall so preside over the bishops whom he shall ordain, as to be in no way subject to the jurisdiction of the bishop of London. But for the future let this distinction be between the bishops of the cities of London and York,

[1] A chronicle formerly belonging to St. Augustine's, Canterbury, (an extract from which may be seen in Smith's Appendix to Beda, No. vii.) gives some account of certain books, vestments, vessels, and relics, which are said to be the same as those sent over by Gregory. Several volumes formerly used to be referred to as having formed part of this donation; but the external evidence is dubious, and the internal evidence condemnatory.

[2] Epp. xi. 65; Opp. ii 1163.

[3] It will be observed that these directions were not strictly complied with; for there never was an archbishop of London, and the metropolitan of York never had half the number of suffragans which Gregory here assigned to him; and further still, Canterbury always had the precedence, and his title was never disputed for centuries.

that he may have the precedence who shall be first ordained. But let them unanimously dispose, by common advice and uniform conduct, whatsoever is to be done for the zeal of Christ; let them arrange matters with unanimity, decree justly, and perform what they judge convenient in a uniform manner.

"But to you, my brother, shall, by the authority of our God and Lord Jesus Christ, be subject not only those bishops you shall ordain, and those that shall be ordained by the bishop of York, but also all the priests in Britain; to the end that from the mouth and life of your holiness they may learn the rule of believing rightly, and living holily; and so fulfilling their office in faith and good conduct, they may, when it shall please the Lord, attain the heavenly kingdom. God preserve you in safety, most reverend brother.

"Dated the 10th of the kalends of July, [22d of June,] in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most pious lord and emperor, Mauritius Tiberius, the eighteenth year after the consulship of our said lord; in the fourth indiction."

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CHAP. XXX. [A.D. 601.]—A COPY OF THE LETTER WHICH POPE GREGORY SENT TO THE ABBOT MELLITUS, THEN GOING INTO BRITAIN.

§ 74. THE aforesaid messengers being departed, the holy father, Gregory, sent after them letters worthy to be preserved in memory, wherein he plainly shows what care he took of the salvation of our nation. The letter[1] was as follows:—

"*To his most beloved son, the Abbot Mellitus; Gregory, the servant of the servants of God.* We have been in much suspense, since the departure of our congregation that is with you, because we have received no account of the success of your journey. When, therefore, Almighty God shall bring you to the most reverend bishop Augustine, our brother, tell him what I have, upon mature deliberation[2] on the affair of the English, determined upon, namely, that the temples of the idols in that nation ought not to be destroyed; but let the idols that are in them be destroyed; let holy water[3] be made and sprinkled in the said temples, let altars be erected, and relics placed. For if those temples are well built, it is requisite that they be converted from the worship of devils to the service of the true God; that the nation, seeing that their temples are not destroyed, may remove error from their hearts, and knowing and adoring the true God, may the more readily resort to the places to which they have been accustomed. And because they have been used to slaughter many oxen in the sacrifices of devils, some solemnity must be exchanged for them on this account,

[1] This letter occurs Epp. xi. 76; Opp. ii. 1176.

[2] In the letter which he addressed to Ethelbert of Kent, Gregory had recommended the destruction of the temples dedicated to the service of idols; but afterwards changing his opinion, he recommended that they should rather be preserved and adapted to the service of the true God. We may hence venture to suspect the accuracy of the dates of these letters as given by Beda, and conjecture that priority should be given to that to which our historian assigns the later date.

[3] See Bishop Morton's Catholicke Appeale, (fol. Lond. 1610,) p. 56.

as that on the day of the dedication, or the nativities of the holy martyrs, whose relics are there deposited, they may build themselves huts of the boughs of trees, about those churches which have been turned to that use from temples, and celebrate the solemnity with religious feasting, and no more offer beasts to the devil, but both kill cattle to the praise of God in their eating, and return thanks to the Giver of all things for their sustenance; to the end that, whilst some gratifications are outwardly permitted them, they may the more easily consent to the inward consolations of the grace of God. For there is no doubt that it is impossible to efface every thing at once from their obdurate minds; because he who endeavours to ascend to the highest place, rises by degrees or steps, and not by leaps. Thus the Lord made himself known to the people of Israel in Egypt; and yet he allowed them the use, in his own worship, of the sacrifices which they were wont to offer to the devil; so as to command them in his sacrifice to kill beasts, to the end that, changing their hearts, they might lay aside one part of the sacrifice, whilst they retained another; that whilst they offered the same beasts which they were wont to offer, they should offer them to God, and not to idols; and thus they would no longer be the same sacrifices. This it behoves your affection to communicate to our aforesaid brother, that he, being there present, may consider how he is to order all things. May God preserve you in safety, most beloved son.

"Dated the 15th of the kalends of July, [the 17th of June,][1] in the nineteenth year of the reign of our lord, the most pious emperor, Mauritius Tiberius, the eighteenth year after the consulship of our said lord; in the fourth indiction."

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CHAP. XXXI. [A.D. 601.]—POPE GREGORY, BY LETTER, EXHORTS AUGUSTINE NOT TO GLORY IN HIS MIRACLES.

§ 75. At which time he also sent Augustine a letter[2] concerning the miracles that he had heard had been wrought by him; wherein he admonishes him not to incur the danger of being puffed up by the number of them. The letter was in these words:—

"I know, most loving brother, that Almighty God, by means of your affection, shows great miracles in the nation which he has chosen. Wherefore it is necessary that you rejoice with fear, and tremble whilst you rejoice, on account of the same heavenly gift; namely, that you may rejoice because the souls of the English are by outward miracles drawn to inward grace; but that you fear, lest, amidst the wonders that are wrought, the weak mind may be puffed up in its own presumption, and as it is externally raised to honour, it may thence inwardly fall by vain-glory. For we must call to mind, that when the disciples returned with joy after preaching, and said to their heavenly Master, 'Lord, in thy name, even the

[1] This letter, being evidently the last of the series, is here assigned to an incorrect date.

[2] Epp. xi. 28; Opp. ii. 1109. This is an extract only; the remainder will be given in its proper place. It was written 1 Jan. 601.

devils are subject to us;' they were presently told, 'Do not rejoice on this account, but rather rejoice for that your names are written in heaven.' [Luke x. 17, 20.] For they placed their thoughts on private and temporal joys, when they rejoiced in miracles; but they are recalled from the private to the public, and from the temporal to the eternal joy, when it is said to them, 'Rejoice for this, because your names are written in heaven.' For all the elect do not work miracles, and yet the names of all are written in heaven. For those who are disciples of the truth ought not to rejoice, save for that good thing which all men enjoy as well as they, and in which they have no faith of private enjoyment.

"It remains, therefore, most dear brother, that amidst those things, which, through the working of our Lord, you outwardly perform, you always inwardly judge yourself strictly, and clearly understand both what you are yourself, and how much grace is in that same nation, for the conversion of which you have also received the gift of working miracles. And if you remember that you have at any time offended our Creator, either by word or deed, that you always call it to mind, to the end that the remembrance of your guilt may crush the vanity which rises in your heart. And whatsoever you shall receive, or have received, in relation to working miracles, that you consider the same, not as conferred on you, but on those for whose salvation it has been given you."

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CHAP. XXXII. [A.D. 601.]—POPE GREGORY SENDS LETTERS AND PRESENTS TO KING ÆDILBERCT.

§ 76. THE same holy pope Gregory, at the same time, sent a letter to king Edilberct, with very many presents of several sorts; being desirous to glorify the king with temporal honours, at the same time that he rejoiced that through his labour and zeal he had attained the knowledge of the heavenly glory. The copy of the said letter is as follows:—

"*To the most glorious Lord, and his most excellent son, Ædilberct, king of the English, Bishop Gregory.* The design of Almighty God in advancing good men to the government of nations is, that He may by their means bestow the gifts of his mercy on those over whom they are placed. This we know to have been done in the English nation, over whom your glory was therefore placed, that by means of the goods which are granted to you, heavenly benefits might also be conferred on the nation that is subject to you. Therefore, my illustrious son, do you with a careful mind preserve the grace which you have received from the Divine goodness, and hasten to promote the christian faith, which you have embraced, among the people under your subjection; multiply the zeal of your uprightness in their conversion; suppress the worship of idols; overthrow the structures[1] of the temples, edify the manners of your subjects, and promote much cleanness of life by exhorting, terrifying, soothing, correcting, and giving examples of good works, that

[1] See § 74, note 2.

you may find Him your rewarder in heaven, whose name and knowledge you shall spread abroad upon earth. For He also will render the fame of your honour more glorious to posterity, whose honour you seek and maintain among the gentiles.

§ 77. "For even so Constantine, our former most pious emperor, recovering the Roman commonwealth from the perverse worship of idols, subjected the same with himself to our Almighty God and Lord Jesus Christ, and was himself, with the people under his subjection, entirely converted to Him. Whence it followed, that his praises transcended the fame of former princes; and he as much excelled his predecessors in renown as he did in good works. Now, therefore, let your glory hasten to infuse into the kings and people that are subject to you, the knowledge of one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that you may both surpass the ancient kings of your nation in praise and merit, and become by so much the more secure against your own sins before the dreadful judgment of Almighty God, as you shall wipe away the sins of others in your subjects.

"Willingly hear, devoutly perform, and studiously retain in your memory, whatsoever you shall be advised by our most reverend brother, bishop Augustine, who is fully instructed in the monastical rule, full of the knowledge of the holy Scripture, and, by the help of God, endued with good works; for if you give ear to him in what he speaks for Almighty God, the same Almighty God will the sooner hear him praying for you. But if (which God avert!) you slight his words, how shall Almighty God hear him in your behalf, whom you neglect to hear for God? Unite yourself, therefore, to him with all your mind, in the fervour of faith, and further his endeavours, through the assistance of that strength which the Divinity affords you, that He may make you partaker of his kingdom whose faith you cause to be received and maintained in your own.

§ 78. "Besides, we would have your glory know, as we find in the holy Scripture, from the words of the Almighty Lord, that the end of this present world, and the kingdom of the saints, is about to come,[1] which will never terminate. But as the same end of the world approaches, many things are at hand which were not before, namely, changes of air, and terrors from heaven, and tempests out of the order of the seasons, wars, famines, plagues, earthquakes in several places; all which things will not, nevertheless, happen in our days, but will all follow after our days. If you, therefore, find any of these things to happen in your country, let not your mind be in any way disturbed; for these signs of the end of the world are sent before, for this reason, that we may be solicitous for our souls, watchful of the hour of our death, and may be found prepared in good works to meet our Judge. Thus much, my illustrious son, I have said in few words, to the end that when the christian faith shall increase in your kingdom, our discourse to you may also be more copious, and we may be permitted to say the more, in pro-

[1] This idea would appear to have been strongly impressed upon the mind of Gregory. See Lib. iii. ep. 23, ed. 1675.

portion as joy for the conversion of your nation is multiplied in our mind.

"I have sent you some small presents, which will not appear small, when received by you with the blessing of the holy apostle, Peter. May Almighty God, therefore, perfect in you that grace of his which He has begun, and prolong your life here through a course of many years, and after a time receive you into the congregation of the heavenly country. May the grace of God preserve your excellency in safety.

"Dated the 10th of the kalends of July, [22d of June,] in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most pious emperor, Mauritius Tiberius, in the eighteenth year after his consulship; in the fourth indiction."

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CHAP. XXXIII. [A.D. 598, or 602.]—AUGUSTINE REPAIRS THE CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR, AND BUILDS THE MONASTERY OF ST. PETER THE APOSTLE; PETER THE FIRST ABBAT OF THE SAME.

§ 79. AUGUSTINE having his episcopal see granted him in the royal city, as has been said, and being supported by the king, recovered therein a church,[1] which he was informed had been built by the ancient Roman Christians, and consecrated it in the name of our holy Saviour, God and Lord, Jesus Christ, and there established a residence for himself and all his successors. He also built a monastery not far from the city to the eastward, in which, by his advice, Aedilberct erected from the foundations the church of the blessed apostles, Peter and Paul, and enriched it with several donations; wherein the bodies of the same Augustine, and of all the bishops of Canterbury, and of the kings of Kent, might be buried. However, Augustine himself did not consecrate that church, but Laurentius, his successor.

The first abbat of that monastery was the priest Peter,[2] who, being sent ambassador into France, was drowned in a bay of the sea, which is called Amfleat,[3] and buried by the inhabitants of the place in an unworthy grave; but Almighty God, to show how deserving a man he was, caused a light to be seen over his grave every night; till the neighbours who saw it, perceiving that he had been a holy man that was buried there, inquiring who and from whence he was, carried away the body, and interred it in the church, in the city of Boulogne, with the honour due to so great a person.

[1] Christ Church, Canterbury, the present cathedral; the monastery presently mentioned afterwards became St. Augustine's abbey.

[2] See Mabill. Act. SS. Bened. ii. 1; Act. SS. Bolland. 1 Jan. p. 334. The year of his death is uncertain, but it occurred before 610.

[3] Now Ambleteuse, a small village, a little to the north of Boulogne.

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CHAP. XXXIV. [A.D. 603.]—ÆDILFRID, KING OF THE NORTHUMBRIANS, HAVING VANQUISHED THE NATIONS OF THE SCOTS, EXPELS THEM FROM THE TERRITORIES OF THE ANGLES.

§ 80. AT this time, Aedilfrid, a most valiant king, and ambitious of glory, governed the kingdom of the Northumbrians, and ravaged the Britons more than all the great men of the Angles, insomuch that he might be compared to Saul, once king of the Israelites, excepting only this, that he was ignorant of the true religion. For he conquered more territories from the Britons, either making them tributary, or expelling the inhabitants, and planting Angles in their places, than any other king or tribune. To him might justly be applied the saying of the patriarch blessing his son in the person of Saul, "Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil." [Gen. xlix. 27.] Hereupon, Aedan,[1] king of the Scots that inhabit Britain, being concerned at this success, came against him with an immense and brave army, but was beaten by an inferior force, and put to flight, escaping with a few only of his followers; for almost all his army was slain at a famous place called Degsastan, that is, Degsastone. In which battle also Theodbald, brother to Aedilfrid, was killed, with almost all the forces he commanded. To this war Aedilfrid put an end in the year 603 after the incarnation of our Lord, the eleventh of his own reign, which lasted twenty-four years, and the first year of the reign of Phocas, who then governed the Roman empire. From that time, no king of the Scots durst come into Britain to make war on the Angles to this day.

## BOOK II.

CHAP. I. [A.D. 604.]—ON THE DEATH OF THE BLESSED POPE GREGORY.

§ 81. AT this time, that is, in the year of our Lord 605,[2] the blessed pope Gregory, after having most gloriously governed the Roman and apostolic see during thirteen years, six months, and ten days, died, and was translated to the eternal see of the heavenly kingdom. Of whom, in regard that he by his zeal converted our nation, namely, the English, from the power of Satan to the faith of Christ, it behoves us to discourse more at large in our Ecclesiastical History, for we may and ought rightly to call him our apostle; because, whereas he bore the pontifical primacy over all the world, and was placed over the churches already reduced to the faith of the truth, he made our nation, till then given up to idols, the

[1] The battle of Degstan, in which Ædan was routed, is ascribed to the year 603, upon the authority of Ussher, Eccl. Brit. Antiq. p. 371. As to the locality of the action, it is contested between Dalston, near Carlisle, and Dawston, in Liddisdale.

[2] He was buried 12th March, 604, and not in 605, as Beda here states, deceived probably by a different mode of calculating the commencement of the year.

church of Christ, so that we may, on that account, be allowed to attribute to him the character of an apostle; for though he be not an apostle to others, yet he is so to us; for we are the seal of his apostleship in the Lord.

§ 82. He was by nation a Roman, son of Gordian, deducing his race from ancestors that were not only noble, but religious. And Felix,[1] once bishop of the same apostolical see, a man of great honour in Christ and his church, was his great-grandfather. Nor did he exercise the nobility of religion with less virtue of devotion than his parents and kindred. But that worldly nobility which he seemed to have, by the help of the Divine Grace, he entirely applied to gain the honour of eternal dignity; for soon quitting his secular habit, he repaired to a monastery, wherein he began to behave himself with so much grace of perfection that (as he was afterwards wont with tears to testify) his mind was superior to all transitory things; that he arose above all that is subject to change; that he used to think of nothing but what was heavenly; that whilst detained by the body, he by contemplation broke through the bonds of flesh; and that he loved death, which is a punishment to almost all men, as the entrance into life, and the reward of his labours. This he was wont to declare of himself, not as boasting of his progress in virtue, but rather as bewailing the decay which he imagined he sustained through the pastoral care. In short, when he was, one day, in private, discoursing with Peter, his deacon, after having enumerated the former virtues of his mind, he with grief added, "But now, on account of the pastoral care, it is oppressed with the affairs of laymen, and, after so beautiful an appearance of repose, is defiled with the dust of earthly action. And after having expended itself by descending to many things that are without, when it desires the inward things, it returns to them less qualified to enjoy them. I therefore consider what I endure, I consider what I have lost, and when I behold that loss, what I bear appears the more grievous."

§ 83. This the holy man said out of the excess of his great humility. But it becomes us to believe that he lost nothing of his monastic perfection by reason of his pastoral care, but rather that he improved the more through the labour of converting many, than by the former repose of his own conversation: and chiefly because, whilst exercising the pontifical function, he provided to have his house made a monastery. And when first drawn from the monastery, ordained to the ministry of the altar, and sent as Respondent[2] to Constantinople from the apostolic see, though his conversation was now in an earthly palace, yet he intermitted not his former heavenly life. For some of the brethren of his monastery, having out of brotherly charity followed him to the royal city, he kept them for the better following of regular observances, namely, that at all times, by their example, as he himself writes, he might be held fast to the

[1] The relationship of Felix to Gregory, as stated by Beda, is not to be understood in its strictest accuracy. Felix was pope from the middle of A.D. 526 to 530.

[2] Upon the date of Gregory's appointment to this office and his continuance in it, see Pagi, A.D. 581, § 5.

calm shore of prayer, as it were with the cable of an anchor, whilst he was tossed up and down by the continual waves of worldly affairs; and daily among them, by the intercourse of studious reading, strengthen his mind, whilst it was shaken with temporal concerns. By their company he was thus not only guarded against earthly assaults, but more and more inflamed in the exercises of a heavenly life.

§ 84. For by their persuasion he gave a mystical exposition of the book of holy Job, which is involved in great obscurity;[1] nor could he refuse to undertake that work, which brotherly affection imposed on him for the future benefit of many; but in a wonderful manner, in five and thirty books of exposition, he taught how that same book is to be understood literally; how to be referred to the mysteries of Christ and the church; and in what sense it is to be adapted to every one of the faithful.[2] This work he began when Respondent in the royal city, but finished it at Rome after having been made pope. Whilst he was still in the royal city, he, by the assistance of the grace of catholic truth, crushed in its first rise, along with its originator, a heresy newly started, concerning the state of our resurrection. For Eutychius,[3] bishop of that city, taught, that our body, in that glory of the resurrection, would be impalpable, and more subtile than the winds and the air; which he hearing, proved by force of truth, and by the example of the resurrection of our Lord, that this doctrine was every way opposite to the orthodox faith. For the catholic faith is, that our body, sublimed by that glory of immortality, is rendered subtile by the effect of the spiritual power, but palpable by the reality of its nature; according to the example of our Lord's body, concerning which, when risen from the dead, He himself says to his disciples, [Luke xxiv. 39,] "Touch me, and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." In asserting which faith, the venerable Father Gregory so earnestly laboured against the newly rising heresy, and by the assistance of the most pious emperor, Tiberius Constantine, so fully crushed it, that none has been since found to revive it.

§ 85. He likewise composed another excellent book, called "Liber Pastoralis,"[4] wherein he manifestly showed what sort of persons ought to be preferred to govern the church; how such rulers ought to live; with how much discretion to instruct every one of their hearers, and how seriously to reflect every day on their own frailty. He also wrote forty Homilies[5] on the Gospel, which he equally divided into two volumes; and composed four books of Dialogues,[6] into which, at the request of Peter, his deacon, he collected the miracles of the saints whom he either had known or heard to have

[1] See Gregorii Opp. i. 15, ed. 1675.

[2] Beda here refers to the threefold method of interpreting Scripture adopted by Gregory, and which he himself employed in many of his commentaries. See Gregory's epistle to Leander, prefixed to his Commentary on Job; and Beda in St. Matt. ii. 11.

[3] On the general history of Eutychianism, see Basnage, Hist. de l'Eglise, p. 510, fol. 1699. Gregory's dispute with Eutychius may be illustrated from his Morals, lib. xiv. cap. 29; Beda in S. Lucam, lib. vi. cap. 24; Ado Viennensis, in Chron. an. 574; and Sigeb. Gemblac. in Chron. an. 580.

[4] Opp. i. 1049. [5] Id. i. 1345. [6] Id. ii. 1.

been most renowned in Italy, for an example of life to posterity; to the end that, as he taught in his books of Expositions, what virtues ought to be laboured for, so by describing the miracles of saints, he might make known the glory of the same. He further, in twenty-two Homilies, discovered how much light there is concealed in the first and last parts of the prophet Ezekiel, which seemed the most obscure. Besides which, he wrote the "Book of Answers, to the questions of St. Augustine," the first bishop of the English nation, as we have shown above[1] by inserting the same book entire in this history; besides the useful little "Synodical Book,"[2] which he composed along with the bishops of Italy, on the necessary affairs of the church; and also familiar Letters to certain persons. And it is the more wonderful that he could write so many and such large volumes,[3] in regard that almost all the time of his youth, to use his own words, he was tormented with frequent pains in his bowels, and a weakness of his stomach, whilst he was hourly, nay momentarily, suffering from slow fever. But whereas at the same time he carefully reflected that, as the Scripture testifies, [Heb. xii. 6,] "Every son that is received is scourged," the more grievously he was depressed under those present evils, the more he assured himself of his eternal salvation.

§ 86. This much may be said of his immortal genius, which could not be restrained by such severe bodily pains; for while other popes applied themselves to the building, or adorning of churches with gold and silver, Gregory was entirely intent upon gaining souls. Whatsoever money he had, he diligently took care to distribute and give to the poor, that his righteousness might endure for ever, and his horn be exalted with honour; so that he might truly say with blessed Job, [xxix. 11—17,] "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and diadem. I was the eye to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was father to the poor; and the cause which I knew not, I diligently searched out. And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth." And a little after: [xxxi. 16—18,] "If I have withheld," says he, "the poor from their desire, or have caused the eye of the widow to fail; if I have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof. For of my youth compassion grew up with me, and from my mother's womb it came forth with me."

§ 87. To these works of piety and righteousness this also may be added, that he saved our nation, by the preachers he sent hither, from the teeth of the old enemy, and made it partaker of eternal

[1] See book i. ch. 27.

[2] It is incorporated in the Life of Gregory by John the Deacon, lib. ii. § 3; Opp. i. 26; and amongst his Epistles, lib. i. ep. 24; Opp. ii. 383.

[3] The collected works of Gregory occupy four volumes in folio, according to the Benedictine edition, Paris, 1705.

liberty; in whose faith and salvation rejoicing, and worthily commending the same, he in his Exposition[1] on holy Job says, "Behold, the British language, which only knew how to utter barbarous speech, has long since begun to resound the Hebrew Hallelujah to the praise of God! Behold, the once swelling ocean now serves prostrate at the feet of the saints; and its barbarous motions, which earthly princes could not subdue with the sword, are now, through the fear of God, bound by the mouths of priests with words only; and he that when an infidel stood not in awe of fighting troops, now a believer, fears the tongues of the humble ones! For by reason that the virtue of the Divine knowledge is infused into it by precepts, heavenly words, and conspicuous miracles, it is curbed by the dread of the same Divinity, so as to fear to act wickedly, and bends all its desires to arrive at eternal grace." In which words holy Gregory declares this also, that St. Augustine and his companions brought the English to receive the truth, not only by the preaching of words, but also by the showing of heavenly signs. The holy pope Gregory, among other things, caused masses to be celebrated in the churches of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, over their bodies. And in the celebration of masses, he added three phrases full of great goodness and perfection: "And dispose our days in thy peace, and preserve us from eternal damnation, and rank us in the flock of thine elect."

§ 88. He governed the church in the days of the emperors Mauritius and Phocas, but passing out of this life in the second year of the same Phocas, he departed to the true life which is in heaven. His body was buried in the church of St. Peter the apostle, before the sacristy, on the 4th of the ides of March, [12 March,] to rise one day in the same body in glory with the rest of the holy pastors of the church. On his tomb was written this epitaph:—

Earth! take that body which at first you gave,
Till God again shall raise it from the grave.
His soul amidst the stars finds heavenly day;
In vain the gates of darkness make essay
On him whose death but leads to life the way.
To the dark tomb, this prelate, though decreed,
Lives in all places by his pious deed.
Before his bounteous board pale Hunger fled;
To warm the poor he fleecy garments spread;
And to secure their souls from Satan's power,
He taught by sacred precepts every hour.
Nor only taught; but first the example led,
Lived o'er his rules, and acted what he said.
To English Saxons christian truth he taught,
And a believing flock to heaven he brought.
This was thy work and study, this thy care,
Offerings to thy Redeemer to prepare.
For these to heavenly honours raised on high,
Where thy reward of labours ne'er shall die.

§ 89. Nor is the account of St. Gregory, which has been handed down to us by the tradition of our ancestors, to be passed by in silence, in relation to his motives for taking such interest in the salvation of our nation. It is reported, that some merchants, having

[1] Lib. xxvii. cap. 6; Opp. i. 779.

just arrived at Rome on a certain day, exposed many things for sale in the market-place, and many people resorted thither to buy: Gregory himself went with the rest, and, among other things, some boys were set to sale, their bodies white, their countenances beautiful, and their hair very fine. Having viewed them, he asked, as is said, from what country or nation they had been brought? and was told, from the island of Britain, whose inhabitants were of such personal appearance. He again inquired whether those islanders were Christians, or still involved in the errors of paganism? and was informed that they were pagans. Then fetching a deep sigh from the bottom of his heart, "Alas! what pity," said he, "that the author of darkness is possessed of men of such fair countenances; and that being remarkable for such a graceful exterior, their minds should be void of inward grace." He therefore again asked, what was the name of that nation? and was answered, that they were called Angles. "Right," said he, "for they have an Angelic face, and it becomes that such should be co-heirs with the Angels in heaven. What is the name," proceeded he, "of the province from which they are brought?" It was replied, that the natives of that province were called Deiri. "Truly are they *de ira*," said he, "plucked from wrath, and called to the mercy of Christ. How is the king of that province called?" They told him his name was Aelli;[1] and he, alluding to the name, said, "Hallelujah, the praise of God the Creator must be sung in those parts."

§ 90. Then repairing to the bishop of the Roman and apostolical see, (for he was not himself pope at that time,) he entreated him to send some ministers of the word into Britain to the nation of the English, by whom it might be converted to Christ; declaring himself ready to undertake that work, by the assistance of God, if the apostolic pope should think fit to have it so done. This he was not then able to perform; because, though the pope was willing to grant his request, yet the citizens of Rome could not be brought to consent that so noble, so renowned, and so learned a man should depart the city; but as soon as he himself was made pope, he perfected the long-desired work, sending other preachers, but himself by his prayers[2] and exhortations assisting the preaching, that it might be successful. This account, as we have received it from the ancients, we have thought fitting to insert in our Ecclesiastical History.

[1] This king reigned over Deira from 559 to 588. The biographers of Gregory are undecided under which pope this incident occurred, whether Pelagius or Benedict his predecessor.

[2] Gregory assisted in this good work with his money also, as appears from more than one of his epistles. See before, book i. ch. 24.

CHAP. II. [A.D. 603.]—AUGUSTINE ADMONISHED THE BISHOPS OF THE BRITONS TO CATHOLIC PEACE AND UNITY, AND TO THAT EFFECT EVEN WROUGHT A HEAVENLY MIRACLE IN THEIR PRESENCE; AND OF THE VENGEANCE THAT PURSUED THEM FOR THEIR CONTEMPT.

§ 91. In the meantime,[1] Augustine, having employed the assistance of King Aedilberct, drew together to a conference the bishops, or doctors, of the nearest province of the Britons, at a place which is to this day called Augustine's Ac, that is, Augustine's Oak,[2] on the borders of the Huiccii and West Saxons; and began by brotherly admonitions to persuade them, that preserving catholic unity with him, they should undertake the common labour of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles for the Lord's sake. For they did not keep Easter Sunday at its proper time, but from the fourteenth to the twentieth of the moon; which computation is contained in a cycle of eighty-four years. Besides, they were in the habit of doing several other things which were against the unity of the church. When, after a long disputation, they did not comply with either the entreaties, or the exhortations, or the rebukes of Augustine and his companions, but preferred their own traditions before all the churches in the world, which in Christ agree among themselves, the holy father Augustine put an end to this troublesome and tedious contention, saying, "Let us beg of God, who makes men to be of one mind in his Father's house, that He will vouchsafe, by his heavenly tokens, to declare to us, which tradition is to be followed; and by what means we are to find our way to his heavenly kingdom. Let some infirm person be brought, and let the faith and practice of those, by whose prayers he shall be healed, be looked upon as acceptable to God, and be adopted by all." The adverse party unwillingly consenting, a blind man of the race of the Angles was brought, who, having been presented to the priests of the Britons, found no benefit or cure from their ministry; at length, Augustine, compelled by real necessity, bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and prayed that the lost sight might be restored to the blind man, and by the corporeal enlightening of one man, the light of spiritual grace might be kindled in the hearts of many of the faithful. Immediately the blind man received sight; and Augustine was by all declared to be the preacher of the Divine truth. The Britons then confessed, that it was the true way of righteousness which Augustine taught; but that they could not cast off their ancient customs without the consent and leave of their people. They therefore desired that a synod might be again appointed, at which more of their number would be present.

§ 92. This being decreed, there came (as is asserted) seven[3]

[1] The date of this meeting is uncertain; Ussher refers it to 602; Pagi to 604; but the year 603 seems better than either to accord with the series of the events here narrated.

[2] Probably at, or near, Aust-clive, in Gloucestershire, the Trajectus of the Romans. See Camden, Brit. col. 278. We may conjecture, however, that the conference was held, not in a town or village, but under an oak. See Mone, Geschichte des nordischen Heidenthumes, ii. 457.

[3] Ussher has taken pains to investigate the sees of these bishops, but his conclusions are founded on conjectures only. See Brit. Eccl. Antiq. pp. 48, 49.

bishops of the Britons, and many most learned men, particularly from their most noble monastery, which, in the language of the Angles, is called Bancornaburg,[1] over which the abbat Dinoot[2] is said to have presided at that time. They that were to go to the aforesaid council, repaired first to a certain holy and discreet man, who was wont to lead an eremitical life among them; consulting with him, whether they ought, at the preaching of Augustine, to forsake their own traditions. He answered, "If he is a man of God, follow him."—"How shall we prove that?" said they. He replied, "Our Lord saith, Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart; [Matt. xi. 29;] if, therefore, this Augustine be meek and lowly of heart, it is to be believed that he has taken upon him the yoke of Christ, and offers the same to you to take upon yourselves. But, if he be stern and haughty, it is plain that he is not of God, nor are we to regard his words." They again asked, "And how shall we discern even this?"—"Do you contrive," said the anchorite, "that he may first arrive with his company at the place where the synod is to be held; and if at your approach he shall rise up to you, hear him submissively, being assured that he is the servant of Christ; but if he shall despise you, and not rise up to you, whereas you are more in number, let him also be despised by you."

§ 93. They did as he directed; and it happened, that when they came, Augustine was sitting on a chair, which they observing, were in a passion, and, charging him with pride, endeavoured to contradict all he said. He said to them, "You act in many particulars contrary to our custom, or rather, to the custom of the universal church, and yet, if you will comply with me in these three points, viz. to keep Easter at the due time; to perfect the administration of baptism,[3] by which we are again born to God, according to the custom of the holy Roman and apostolic church; and jointly with us to preach the word of God to the nation of the Angles, we will readily tolerate all the other things you do, though contrary to our customs." They answered,[4] they would do none of those things, nor receive him as their archbishop; for they alleged among themselves, that, "if he would not now rise up to us, how much more will he contemn us, as of no worth, if we shall begin to be under his subjection?" To whom the man of God, Augustine, is said, in a threatening manner, to have foretold, that in case they would not join in peace with their brethren, they should be warred upon by their enemies; and if they would not preach the way of life to the English nation, they should at their hands undergo the ven-

[1] Upon the river Dee, not far from Chester, commonly called Bangor-is-y-Coed, to distinguish it from the Bangor on the Menai Straits. See Camd. Brit. col. 665, 666.

[2] According to the Welsh authorities Dunawd, or Dunod-Fyr, was a retired warrior, who founded the Abbey of Bangor, and became its first abbot. His sister had married Brocwell Ysygthrog.

[3] Namely, by the administration of the rite of the laying on of hands in Confirmation. See Bingham, book xii. ch. 1, § 4.

[4] The answer of the abbot of Bangor, written in Welsh, is printed by Wilkins, in his Concilia, i. 26; Spelm. i. 108; but it is the production of a comparatively modern period, and is of no value. See Collier, i. 76; Pagi, ad an. 604, § viii.; Stillingfleet's Antiq. Brit. Ch. p. 360; and Pantou's preface to the last work, p. viii.

geance of death. All which, through the dispensation of the Divine judgment, fell out exactly as he had predicted.

§ 94. For afterwards [A.D. 613[1]], the warlike king of the English, Aedilfrid, of whom we have already spoken,[2] having raised a mighty army, made a very great slaughter of that perfidious nation, at the "City of the Legions," which by the English is called Legacaestir, but by the Britons more correctly Carlegion.[3] For being about to give battle, he observed their priests, who were come together to offer up their prayers to God for the soldiers in the battle, standing apart in a place of greater safety; he inquired who they were, or what they came together to do in that place. Most of them were of the monastery of Bancor, in which, it is reported, there was so great a number of monks, that the monastery being divided into seven parts, with a provost over each, none of those divisions contained fewer than three hundred men, who all lived by the labour of their hands. Many of these, after having observed a fast of three days, resorted among others to pray at the aforesaid battle, having one Brocmail[4] appointed for their protector, to defend them, whilst they were intent upon their prayers, against the swords of the barbarians. King Aedilfrid, being informed of the occasion of their coming, said, "If, then, they cry to their God against us, though of a truth they do not bear arms, yet they fight against us, because they oppose us by their imprecations." He therefore commanded them first to be attacked, and then destroyed the rest of the impious army, yet not without considerable loss to his own forces. About twelve hundred of those that came to pray are said to have been killed, and only fifty to have escaped by flight. Brocmail turning his back with his men, at the first approach of the enemy, left those whom he ought to have defended unarmed and exposed to the swords of the enemies. Thus was fulfilled the prediction of the holy bishop Augustine, (though[5] he himself had been long before taken up into the heavenly kingdom,) that those perfidious men should feel the vengeance of temporal death also, because they had despised the offer of eternal salvation.

[1] The Annals of Ulster refer this slaughter to A.D. 613, and their authority seems worthy of adoption. See Ussher ad an.

[2] Namely, in book i. ch. 34, § 80.

[3] On the river Dee, now Chester, the Deva of Antoninus. See Camd. Brit. col. 667; Ussher, p. 69.

[4] This Brocmael, or Brocwel, surnamed Ysygthrog, the son of Conan and father of Tyssilio, was prince of Powis. He, together with Cadvan, king of Britain, Morgan, king of Demetia, and Bledericus, king of Cornwall, are said by the Welsh authors to have been the commanders of the British army; see Enderbie, p. 213.

[5] It seems now generally admitted that the attempt formerly made to consider this clause as the interpolation of a later period must be abandoned. Whelock and Smith state that it occurred in every one of the many ancient copies which they consulted, and I may be allowed to add my testimony to theirs, were any such confirmation necessary. The question of Augustine's participation in the slaughter of the monks of Banchor is examined at great length by Collier, i. 77; Smith (bishop of Chalcedon), Flores Hist. Eccl. Gentis Anglor. lib. i. cap. 7; Mabillon, Annal. Bened. ad an. 607.

CHAP. III. [A.D. 604.]—HOW ST. AUGUSTINE MADE MELLITUS AND JUSTUS BISHOPS; AND OF HIS DEATH.

§ 95. In the year[1] of our Lord's incarnation 604, Augustine, archbishop of Britain, ordained two bishops, viz. Mellitus and Justus; Mellitus to preach to the province of the East Saxons, who are divided from Kent by the river Thames, and border on the Eastern sea. Their metropolis is the city of London, which is situated on the bank of the aforesaid river, and is the mart of many nations resorting to it by sea and land. At that time, Saberct, nephew to Aedilberct by his sister Ricula, reigned over this nation, though he was under subjection to Aedilberct, who (as has been said above) had command[2] over all the nations of the Angles as far as the river Humber. But when this province also received the word of truth, by the preaching of Mellitus, king Aedilberct built the church of St. Paul the apostle, in the city of London, in which he and his successors should have their episcopal see. As for Justus, Augustine ordained him bishop in Kent, in the city of Dorabrevum, which the nation of the Angles named Hrofaescaestaer, from one who was formerly the chief man of it, called Hrof. It is almost twenty-four miles distant from the city of Doruvernum to the westward, and contains a church dedicated to St. Andrew[3] the apostle. King Aedilberct, who built it, bestowed many gifts on the bishops of both those churches, as well as on that of Doruvernum, adding lands and possessions for the use of those who were with the bishops.

§ 96. After this, [A.D. 605,] the beloved of God, father Augustine, died,[4] and his body was deposited without, close by the church of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, above spoken of, by reason that the same was not yet finished, nor consecrated. But as soon as it was dedicated,[5] the body was brought in, and decently buried in the north porch thereof; wherein also were interred the bodies of all the succeeding archbishops, except two only, Theodore and Berthwald, whose bodies are within that church, because the aforesaid porch could contain no more. Almost in the midst of this church is an altar dedicated[6] in honour of the blessed pope Gregory, at which every Saturday their "Agendæ" are solemnly performed by the priest of that place. On the tomb of the said Augustine is written this epitaph:—

"Here rests the lord Augustine, the first archbishop of Canterbury, who, being formerly sent hither by the blessed Gregory, bishop of the city of Rome, and by God's assistance supported with

[1] The Saxon version modifies this statement, affirming only that the events of § 95 occurred after those narrated in the previous chapter.

[2] On the dignity of the Bretwalda, a fertile subject for discussion, see Lappenberg, i. 126.

[3] Out of respect, probably, to the monastery in which Augustine had resided previous to his English mission.

[4] The date of the death of Augustine is uncertain. That it was between 604 and 610 is clear. Mabillon places it in 607, followed, but with some hesitation, by Pagi. Wharton prefers 604; Smith contends for 605, following Elmham, ap. Decem Script. col. 2229. The Saxon version leaves it indefinite.

[5] In A.D. 613, according to Thorne, col. 1767; and Elmham, col. 2229.

[6] See the proceedings of the council of Cloveshoe, A.D. 747, cap. 17.

miracles, reduced king Aedilberct and his nation from the worship of idols to the faith of Christ; and having ended the days of his ministration in peace, died on the 7th of the kalends of June, [26th day of May,] in the reign of the same king.'

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CHAP. IV. [A.D. 605.]—LAURENTIUS AND HIS FELLOW-BISHOPS ADMONISH THE SCOTS TO OBSERVE THE UNITY OF THE HOLY CHURCH, PARTICULARLY IN THE KEEPING OF EASTER; MELLITUS GOES TO ROME.

§ 97. LAURENTIUS succeeded Augustine in the bishopric, having been ordained thereto by the latter, in his lifetime, lest, upon his death, the stability of the church, as yet unsettled, might begin to falter, if it should be destitute of a pastor, though but for one hour. Wherein he also followed the example of the first pastor of the church, that is, of the most blessed prince of the apostles, Peter, who, having founded the church of Christ at Rome, is said to have consecrated Clement his assistant in preaching the gospel, and at the same time his successor.[1] Laurentius, being advanced to the degree of an archbishop, laboured indefatigably, both by frequent exhortations and examples of piety, to raise to its requisite perfection the foundations of the church, which had been so nobly laid. In short, he not only took care of the new church formed among the English, but endeavoured also to exercise his pastoral solicitude over the ancient inhabitants of Britain, as also the Scots, who inhabit the island of Ireland, which is next to Britain. For when he understood that the course of life and profession of the Scots in their aforesaid country, as well as of the Britons in Britain, was by no means ecclesiastical in many points; especially, that they did not celebrate the solemnity of Easter at the due time, but thought that the day of the Resurrection of our Lord was, as has been said[2] above, to be celebrated between the fourteenth and twentieth of the moon; he wrote, jointly with his fellow-bishops, an exhortatory epistle, entreating and conjuring them to observe unity of peace, and conformity with the church of Christ spread throughout the world. The beginning of which epistle is as follows:—

§ 98. "*To our most dear brothers, the lords bishops and abbats throughout all Scotland; Laurentius, Mellitus, and Justus, servants of the servants of God.* When the apostolic see, according to the universal custom which it has followed elsewhere over the globe, sent us to these western parts to preach to pagan nations, we happened to come into this island, which is called Britain, without possessing any previous knowledge of its inhabitants. We held both the Britons and Scots in great esteem for sanctity, believing that they had proceeded according to the custom of the universal church; but after becoming acquainted with the Britons, we thought the Scots had been better. We have been informed, however, by Bishop

[1] See Vallarsius upon St. Jerome, De Viris Illustr. cap. 15; Opp. ii. 839, upon the succession of Clement immediately after St. Peter. [2] See § 91.

Dagan,[1] coming into this aforesaid island, and the abbat Columbanus[2] in France, that the Scots in no way differ from the Britons, in their behaviour; for bishop Dagan[3] coming to us, not only refused to eat with us, but even to take his repast in the same house where we were entertained."

The same Laurentius and his fellow-bishops wrote a letter[4] to the priests of the Britons, suitable to his rank, by which he endeavours to confirm them in catholic unity; but what he gained by so doing the present times still declare.

§ 99. About this time, Mellitus, bishop of London, went to Rome, to confer with pope Boniface about the necessary affairs of the English church. And when the same most reverend pope assembled a synod[5] of the bishops of Italy, to prescribe orders for the life and peace of the monks, Mellitus also sat among them, in the eighth year of the reign of the emperor Phocas, the thirteenth indiction, on the third of the kalends of March, [27th of February,] [A.D. 610,] to the end that he also by his authority might confirm such things as should be regularly decreed, and at his return into Britain might carry the same to the churches of the English, to be prescribed and observed; together with letters[6] which the same pope sent to the beloved of God, archbishop Laurentius, and to all the clergy; as likewise to king Aedilberct and the English nation. This pope was Boniface, who came fourth after pope Gregory, the bishop of the city of Rome, and who obtained of the emperor Phocas that the temple called by the ancients Pantheon, as representing all the gods, should be given to the church of Christ; wherein he, having purified it from every contamination, dedicated a church to the holy mother of God, and to all Christ's martyrs, to the end that, all the devils being excluded, the blessed company of the saints might have therein a perpetual memorial.

[1] One of the same name, and apparently the same individual, conveyed to Gregory, at Rome, a copy of the ecclesiastical rule of an Irishman named Molua. See Ussher, p. 476. It is stated, but upon no satisfactory authority, that he was sent from the Irish Banchor to confer with Archbishop Laurence upon the matters in dispute between the two churches.

[2] The proceedings of Columbanus in France are recorded with great minuteness by Mabillon, in the first volume of his Benedictine Annals, to which work the reader is referred for further information.

[3] Probably the same individual as is mentioned in the Life of Pulcherius, Acta Sanct. mens. Martii, ii. 286.

[4] It would appear that this letter must have been written before the slaughter of the Britons at the battle of Chester, for after that event we can hardly suppose that any such attempt could have been made.

[5] This synod was held at Rome, 27th Feb. 610, and was occupied chiefly in securing the interests of the monks. Its proceedings are printed in Labb. Concil. V. 1617. Later authorities inform us that the journey was undertaken to procure the consecration of the church of Westminster. See Baronius, ad an. 610, § 10; Ailred, ap. Decem Script. col. 305; Pagi, ad an. 610, § 10.

[6] This letter occurs in Malmesb. De Gestis Pontiff., and will be given in its proper place.

CHAP. V. [A.D. 616.]—HOW, AFTER THE DEATH OF THE KINGS AEDILBERCT AND SABERCT, THEIR SUCCESSORS RESTORED IDOLATRY; FOR WHICH REASON, BOTH MELLITUS AND JUSTUS DEPARTED OUT OF BRITAIN.

§ 100. IN the year of our Lord's incarnation 616, which is the twenty-first[1] year after Augustine and his companions were sent to preach to the English nation, Aedilberct, king of Kent, having most gloriously governed his temporal kingdom fifty-six years, entered into the eternal joys of the heavenly kingdom. He was the third of the kings of the nation of the Angles that had the sovereignty of all the southern provinces that are divided from the northern by the river Humber, and the borders contiguous to the same; but the first of all of them that ascended to the heavenly kingdom. The first who had the like sovereignty was Aelli, king of the South Saxons; the second, Caelin,[2] king of the West Saxons, who, in their language, is called Ceaulin; the third, as has been said, was Aedilberct, king of Kent; the fourth was Reduald, king of the East Angles, who, whilst Aedilberct lived, had yielded to him the superiority over that nation; the fifth was Aeduin, king of the nation of the Northumbrians, that is, of those who live on the northern side of the river Humber, who, with great power, commanded all the nations, as well of the English as of the Britons who inhabit Britain, except only the people of Kent, and he reduced also under the dominion of the Angles the Mevanian Islands[3] of the Britons, lying between Ireland and Britain; the sixth was Osuald, the most christian king of the Northumbrians, who also had the same extent under his command; the seventh, Osuiu, brother to the former, held nearly the same dominions for some time, and for the most part subdued and made tributary the nations of the Picts and Scots, which possess the northern parts of Britain: but of these hereafter.

§ 101. King Aedilberct died on the 24th day of the month of February, twenty-one years after he had received the faith,[4] and was buried in St. Martin's porch,[5] within the church of the blessed apostles

[1] As it is stated at § 101 that this king died twenty-one years after he had embraced Christianity, it would appear that this present calculation is not to be interpreted in its strictest sense. A difficulty hence arising in the minds of the copyists of the MSS., they endeavoured to remove it by altering the original text; some read 613, some 617; but the date 616 is supported as well by the best MSS. in England, as also by six in Paris, which were collated by Pagi, Critic. ad Baron. A.D. 613, § 8. The Saxon version says it was "about" the year 616.

[2] Caelin reigned A.D. 560—593; Edwin, 617—633; Oswald, 634—642; Oswiu 642—670.

[3] Namely, Anglesea and the Isle of Man.

[4] See the first note at the beginning of this chapter.

[5] Architectural antiquaries have not yet decided what part of the church is here meant. Bentham, in his remarks upon Saxon churches prefixed to his History of Ely, thinks that it designates the side aisles of the church, or that it may sometimes be a particular division of it, consisting of one arch with its recess. But there is no evidence that the Saxon churches had any side aisles, and it is certain that the early Irish churches had none. See Petrie's Essay on Round Towers, p. 438. Wilkin, in his Essay on the Saxon Church at Melbourne, (Archæolog. xiii.) agrees with Bentham, that the porticos were within the church, but rejects the idea that they were side aisles, or any portion of them. But finding that in the church of Melbourne, which he believed to be of the

Peter and Paul, where also lies his queen, Bertha. Among other benefits which he conferred upon his nation, he also, by the advice of wise persons,[1] introduced judicial decrees, after the Roman model; which, being written in English, are still kept and observed by them.[2] Among which, he in the first place set down what satisfaction should be given by those who should steal anything belonging to the church, the bishop, or the other clergy, resolving to give protection to those whom, and whose doctrine, he had embraced.

This Aedilberct was the son of Irminric, whose father was Octa, whose father was Oeric, surnamed Oisc, from whom the kings of Kent are wont to be called Oiscings. His father was Hengist, who, being invited by Vurtigern, first came into Britain, with his son Oisc, as has been said above.

§ 102. But after the death of Aedilberct, the accession of his son Eadbald proved very prejudicial to the infant church; for he not only refused to embrace the faith of Christ, but was also defiled with such a sort of fornication, as the apostle testifies [1 Cor. v. 1] was not heard of, even among the Gentiles; for he retained his father's wife.[3] By both which crimes he gave occasion to those to return to their former uncleanness, who, under his father's reign, had, either for favour, or through fear of the king, submitted to the laws of faith and chastity. Nor did the perfidious king escape without Divine punishment and correction; for he was troubled with frequent fits of madness, and by the assaults of an evil spirit. This confusion was increased by the death[4] of Saberct, king of the East Saxons, who, departing to the heavenly kingdom, left three sons, still pagans, to inherit his temporal crown. They immediately began openly to profess idolatry, which, during their father's reign, they had seemed a little to abandon, and they granted free liberty to the people under their government to serve idols. And when they saw the bishop, whilst celebrating mass in the church, give the eucharist to the people, they, puffed up with barbarous folly, as it is reported, went on to say to him, "Why do you not give us also that white bread, which you used to give to our father Saba, (for so they used to call him,) and which you still continue to give to the people in the church?" To whom he answered, "If you will be washed in that laver of salvation, in which your father was washed, you may also partake of the holy bread of which he partook; but if you despise the laver of life, you may not by any means receive the bread of life." They replied, "We will not enter into that laver, because we do not know that we stand in need of it, and yet we will eat of that bread." And

seventh (?) century, a portion of the west end divided from the nave, and subdivided into three parts, he concludes that these are specimens of the porticos mentioned by Beda. But architectural knowledge has made such rapid strides since his time, that his conclusions must be adopted with caution.

[1] The witena-gemot, or supreme council of the nation, which was summoned, among other purposes, for the promulgation of the laws both of the church and state.

[2] These laws are still extant, and have recently been printed in the "Ancient Laws and Institutes of England," i. 1.

[3] After the death of Bertha, Ethelbert married a second wife, whose name has purposely been concealed by the historians.

[4] Apparently about the year 616.

being often and earnestly admonished by him, that the same could by no means be done, nor any one admitted to communicate in the sacred oblation without the holy cleansing, at last, they said in anger, "If you will not comply with us in so small a matter as that is which we require, you shall no longer stay in our province." And accordingly they obliged him and his followers to depart from their kingdom.

§ 103. Being forced from thence, he came into Kent, to advise with his fellow-bishops, Laurentius and Justus, what was to be done in that case; and it was unanimously agreed, that it was better for them all to return to their own country, where they might serve God with a free mind, than to continue without any fruit among those barbarians, who had revolted from the faith. Mellitus and Justus accordingly went away first, and withdrew into France, designing there to await the event of things. But the kings, who had driven from them the preacher of the truth, did not continue long unpunished in their heathenish worship. For, marching out to battle against the nation of the Geuissæ,[1] they were all slain with their army. However, the people having been once turned to wickedness, though the authors of it were destroyed, would not be corrected, nor return to the simplicity of the faith and love which is in Christ.

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CHAP. VI. [A.D. 617.]—LAURENTIUS, BEING REPROVED BY THE APOSTLE, CONVERTS KING EADBALD TO CHRIST; MELLITUS AND JUSTUS ARE RECALLED.

§ 104. LAURENTIUS, being about to follow Mellitus and Justus, and to quit Britain, ordered his bed to be laid, the night before his departure, in the church of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, which has been often mentioned before; wherein having laid himself to take some rest, after he had poured out many prayers and tears to God for the state of the church, he fell asleep. In the dead of the night, the blessed prince of the apostles appeared to him, and sharply scourging him a long time, asked of him, with apostolical severity, "Why he would forsake the flock which he himself had committed to him? or to what shepherds he, when he deserted them, would commit Christ's sheep that were in the midst of wolves? Have you," said he, "forgotten my example, who, for the sake of those little ones, whom Christ recommended to me in token of his affection, underwent at the hands of infidels and the enemies of Christ, bonds, stripes, imprisonment, afflictions, and lastly, death, even the death of the cross, that I might at last be crowned with Him?" Laurentius, the servant of Christ, being encouraged by these words and stripes, the very next morning repaired to the king, and stripping back his garment, showed the gashes of the stripes which he had received. The king, astonished, asked, "Who had presumed to give such stripes to so great a man?" and was much frightened when he heard that the bishop had suffered such torments and blows at the hands of the apostle of Christ for his (the king's) salvation. Then wholly abjuring the worship of

[1] Or West Saxons, as is proved by the Saxon paraphrase.

idols, and renouncing his unlawful marriage, he embraced the faith of Christ, and being baptized, promoted the affairs of the church to the utmost of his power in every respect.

§ 105. [A.D. 617.]—He also sent over into France, and recalled[1] Mellitus and Justus, and commanded them freely to return to govern their churches, which they accordingly did, one year after their departure. Justus, indeed, returned to the city of Rochester, over which he had before presided; but the Londoners would not receive bishop Mellitus, choosing rather to be under their idolatrous high priests; for king Eadbald had not so much authority in the kingdom as his father had possessed, nor was he able to restore the bishop to his church against the will and consent of the pagans. But he and his nation, after his conversion to our Lord, diligently conformed themselves to the Divine precepts. Lastly, he built[2] the church of the holy mother of God, in the monastery of the most blessed prince of the apostles, which was consecrated by archbishop Mellitus.

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CHAP. VII. [A.D. 619.]—HOW BISHOP MELLITUS BY PRAYER QUENCHES A FIRE IN HIS CITY.

§ 106. IN this king's reign,[3] the holy archbishop Laurentius was taken up to the heavenly kingdom: he was buried in the church and monastery of the holy apostle Peter, close by his predecessor Augustine, on the 4th day of the nones of February. [Feb. 2.] After whom, Mellitus, who was bishop of London, was the third archbishop of Canterbury from Augustine; Justus, who was still living, governed the church of Rochester. These ruled the church of the English with much industry and labour, and received letters of exhortation from Boniface,[4] bishop of the Roman and apostolic see, who presided over the church after Deusdedit, in the year of our Lord 619. Mellitus laboured under an infirmity of body, that is, the gout; but his mind was sound, cheerfully passing over all earthly things, and always aspiring to love, seek, and attain those which are celestial. He was noble by birth, but much nobler in mind.

§ 107. In short, that I may give one proof of his virtue, by which the rest may be guessed at, it happened once that the city of Canterbury, being by carelessness set on fire, was in danger of being consumed by the spreading conflagration; water was thrown over the fire in vain; a considerable part of the city was already destroyed, and the fierce flame advancing towards the bishop's residence, when he, confiding in the Divine assistance, where human failed, ordered

[1] Smith places the return of Mellitus and Justus under the year 618, but it seems more probable that it is to be referred to 617. However, Thorne and Elmham also ascribe this event to A.D. 618.

[2] See Thorne, ap. Decem Scriptores, col. 1678.

[3] Although Beda does not indicate the exact year of the death of archbishop Laurentius, yet it seems clear, from the sequence of the narrative, that this event took place in 619.

[4] Deusdedit was buried 8th Nov. 618, was succeeded by Boniface V, who was not consecrated until 23d Dec. 619. The date in the text would seem to apply to his accession, not to the period when his letters reached England.

himself to be carried towards the raging fire, which was spreading on every side. The church of the four crowned Martyrs was in the place where the fire raged most. The bishop being carried thither by the hands of those who obeyed him, the sick man averted the danger by prayer, which a number of strong men had not been able to perform by much labour. Immediately, the wind, which blowing from the south had spread the conflagration throughout the city, turning to the north, first prevented the destruction of those places that had lain in its way, and then ceasing entirely, the flames were immediately subdued and extinguished. And thus the man of God, whose mind was inflamed with the fire of Divine charity, since he was wont to drive away the powers of the air by his frequent prayers, from doing harm to himself, or his people, was deservedly allowed to prevail over the winds and flames of this world, and to obtain that they should not injure him or his people.

This archbishop also, having ruled the church five years, [A.D. 624,] departed[1] to heaven in the reign of king Aeodbald, and was buried with his predecessors in the monastery and church (which we have so often mentioned) of the most blessed prince of the apostles, in the year of our Lord's incarnation 624, on the eighth of the kalends of May [24th of April].

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CHAP. VIII. [A.D. 624.]—POPE BONIFACE SENDS THE PALL AND AN EPISTLE TO JUSTUS, SUCCESSOR TO MELLITUS.

§ 108. JUSTUS, bishop of Rochester, immediately succeeded Mellitus in the archbishopric. He consecrated Romanus bishop of that see in his own stead, having obtained leave for the ordaining of bishops from pope Boniface, whom we mentioned above[2] to have been successor to Deusdedit: of which licence this is the form:—

"*Boniface, to his most beloved brother, Justus.* Not only have the contents of your letter, but the perfection unto which your work has attained, informed us how devoutly and vigilantly you have laboured, my brother, for the Gospel of Christ; for Almighty God has not forsaken either the mystery of his name, or the fruit of your labours, having himself faithfully promised to the preachers of the gospel, 'Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world' [Matt. xxviii. 20]; which promise his mercy has specially manifested in this ministry of yours, opening the hearts of nations to receive the singular ministry of your preaching. For He has enlightened the acceptable course of your endeavours, by the approbation of his grace; granting a plentiful increase to your most faithful management of the talents committed to you, and which you may make manifest to many generations. This is by that reward conferred on you, who, by constantly adhering to the ministry enjoined you, with laudable patience have awaited the redemption of that nation, whose salvation is set on foot that they may profit by your merits, our

[1] All martyrologies, including Beda's genuine production, unite in assigning this event to 24th April, 624.

[2] See ch. 7.

Lord himself saying, [Matt. x. 22,] 'He that perseveres to the end shall be saved.' You are, therefore, saved by the hope of patience, and the virtue of endurance, to the end that the hearts of infidels, being cleansed from their natural and superstitious disease, might obtain the mercy of their Redeemer: for having received the letters of our son Adulvald, we perceive with how much knowledge of the sacred word your mind, my brother, has brought him over to the belief in real conversion and the true faith. Therefore, firmly confiding in the long-suffering of the Divine clemency, we believe there will, through the ministry of your preaching, ensue most full salvation, not only to the nations subject to him, but also to those that neighbour round about; to the end that, as it is written, the reward of a perfect work may be conferred on you by our Lord, the giver of all good things; and that the universal confession of all nations, having received the mystery of the christian faith, may declare that their 'sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.' [Rom. x. 18.]

§ 109. "We have also, my brother, encouraged by a zeal for what is good, sent you by the bearer of these the pall, which we have given you leave to use only in the celebration of the sacred mysteries; granting you likewise to ordain bishops when occasion shall require, through the mercy of our Lord; that so the gospel of Christ, by the preaching of many, may be spread abroad in all the nations that are not yet converted. You must, therefore, endeavour, my brother, to preserve with unblemished sincerity of mind, that which you have received through the favour of the apostolic see, as an emblem whereof you have obtained so principal an ornament to be borne on your shoulders. And make it your business, imploring the Divine goodness, so to behave yourself, that you may present before the tribunal of the Supreme Judge that is to come, the rewards of the favour granted you, not with guiltiness, but with the benefit of souls.

"God preserve you in safety, most dear brother!"[1]

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CHAP. IX. [A.D. 625.]—THE REIGN OF KING AEDUIN, AND HOW PAULINUS, COMING TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO HIM, FIRST CONVERTED HIS DAUGHTER AND OTHERS TO THE FAITH OF CHRIST.

§ 110. AT this time the nation of the Northumbrians, that is, the nation of the Angles that live on the north side of the river Humber, with their king, Aeduin, received the faith through the preaching of Paulinus, whom we have mentioned above. This sovereign, as an earnest of his receiving the faith, and of his share in the heavenly kingdom, obtained an increase of that which he enjoyed on earth; for he reduced under his dominion all the borders of Britain that were provinces either of the aforesaid nation, or of the Britons, a thing which no British king had ever done before;

[1] This letter is addressed to Justus, no longer bishop of Rochester, but now archbishop of Canterbury, and therefore in 624. Baronius is in error when he designates him as archbishop of Rochester, and refers this letter to the year 618. (§ 1, 2.)

and he in like manner subjected to the English the Mevanian islands, as has been said above.[1] The first whereof, which is to the southward, is the largest in extent, and most fruitful in its produce, containing nine hundred and sixty families, according to the English computation; the other above three hundred.

§ 111. The occasion of this nation embracing the faith was this: their aforesaid king being allied to the kings of Kent, having taken to wife Aedilbergae, otherwise called Tatae, daughter to king Aedilberct. He having by his suitors asked her in marriage of her brother, Aeodbald, who then reigned in Kent, was answered, "That it was not lawful to marry a christian virgin to a pagan husband, lest the faith and the sacraments of the heavenly King should be profaned by her cohabiting with a king who was altogether a stranger to the worship of the true God." This answer being brought to Aeduin by his messengers, he promised that he would in no manner act in opposition to the christian faith, which the virgin professed; but rather would give leave to her, and all that should go with her, men or women, priests or ministers, to follow their faith and worship after the custom of the Christians. Nor did he affirm that he would not embrace the same religion, if, being examined by wise persons, it should be found more holy and more worthy of God.

§ 112. Hereupon the virgin was promised, and sent to Aeduin; and pursuant to what had been agreed on, Paulinus, a man beloved of God, was ordained bishop, to go with her, and by daily exhortations, and celebrating the heavenly sacraments, to confirm her and her company, lest they should be corrupted by the company of the pagans. Paulinus was ordained bishop by archbishop Justus, on the 12th of the kalends of August [21st of July], in the year of our Lord's incarnation 625, and so he came to king Aeduin with the aforesaid virgin, as a companion of their union in the flesh. But his mind was wholly bent upon reducing the nation, to which he was sent, to the knowledge of the truth; according to the words of the apostle, "To espouse her to one husband, that he might present her as a chaste virgin to Christ." [2 Cor. xi. 2.] Being come into that province, he laboured much, not only to retain those that went with him, by the help of God, that they should not revolt from the faith, but, if he could, to convert some of the pagans to the grace of faith, by his preaching. But, as the apostle says, though he laboured long in the Word, "The god of this world blinded the eyes of them that believed not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them." [2 Cor. iv. 4.]

§ 113. The next year [A.D. 626] there came into the province a certain assassin, called Eumer, sent by the king of the West Saxons, whose name was Cuichelm, in hope at once to deprive king Aeduin of his kingdom and his life. He had with him a two-edged dagger, dipped in poison; to the end, that if the wound of the blade were not sufficient to kill the king, he might be slain by the venom. He came

[1] Namely in ch. v. of this book, § 100. Carte, in his History of England, i. 226, gives from the British Triads an account of the contest between Edwin and Cadwallon, which ended in the defeat of the latter.

to the king on the first day of Easter, near the river Derwent, where then stood the regal city,[1] and was admitted as if to deliver a message from his master. Whilst he was in an artful manner delivering his pretended embassy, he started up on a sudden, and drawing the dagger from under his garment, he made a rush at the king; which Lilla, the king's beloved minister, observing, and having no buckler at hand to defend the king from death, he interposed his own body to receive the stroke; but the enemy struck so home, that he wounded the king through the slain knight's body. Being then attacked on all sides with swords, he in that confusion also slew with his accursed dagger another soldier, whose name was Frodheri.

§ 114. On that same holy night of Easter Sunday, the queen had brought forth to the king a daughter, called Eanfled. The king, in the presence of bishop Paulinus, gave thanks to his gods for the birth of his daughter; and the bishop, on the other hand, began to return thanks to Christ, and endeavoured to persuade the king, that by his prayers to the Lord he had obtained that the queen should bring forth the child in safety, and without much pain. The king, delighted with his words, promised, that in case God would grant him life and victory over the king by whom that assassin had been sent, he would renounce his idols, and serve Christ; and as a pledge that he would perform his promise, he delivered up that same daughter of his to bishop Paulinus, to be consecrated to Christ. She was the first baptized of the nation of the Northumbrians, on the holy day of Pentecost, with eleven others of his family.[2] At that time, the king being recovered of the wound which he had before received, marched with his army which he had collected against the nation of the West Saxons; and having begun the war, either slew or subdued all those that he had been informed had conspired to murder him. Returning thus victorious into his own country, he would not immediately and unadvisedly embrace the sacraments of the christian faith, though neither would he any longer worship idols, ever since he made the promise that he would serve Christ; but he thought fit first at leisure to be more diligently instructed, by the venerable Paulinus, in the knowledge of the faith, and to confer with such as he knew to be the wisest of his chief men, to advise what should be done in that case. And being a man of extraordinary natural sagacity, he often sat alone by himself a long time, silent as to his tongue, but deliberating in his heart how he should proceed, and to which religion he should adhere.

[1] Supposed by Camden, with much probability, to be "a little town upon the Derwent, called Auldby, which signifies in Saxon the 'old habitation,' where some remains of antiquity are still to be met with, and upon the top of the hill towards the river is the rubbish of an old castle."—Camd. Brit. col. 887.

[2] Eanfled was born 20th April, and baptized 8th June, 626. We hence gather that the custom of administering baptism only on the great festivals of the church, such as Easter and Pentecost, was observed in England. As to the number baptized, the MSS. here vary, most of them specifying twelve (not eleven, as in the text); but the Saxon version and one of the best copies of the original agree in stating that Eanfled formed the twelfth.

CHAP. X. [A.D. 625.]—POPE BONIFACE, BY LETTER, EXHORTS THE SAME KING TO EMBRACE THE FAITH.

§ 115. AT this time[1] he received letters from pope Boniface, exhorting him to embrace the faith, which were as follows :—

A Copy of the Letter of the holy and apostolic Pope of the Church of Rome, Boniface, to the beloved and glorious Aeduin, King of the Angles.

"*To the illustrious Aeduin, King of the Angles, Bishop Boniface, the servant of the servants of God.* Although the power of the Supreme Deity cannot be expressed by human speech, as consisting in its own greatness, and in invisible and unsearchable eternity, so that no sharpness of wit can adequately comprehend or express it; yet in regard that the goodness of God, to give some notion of itself, having opened the doors of the heart, has mercifully, by secret inspiration, infused into the minds of men such things as He is willing shall be declared concerning himself, we have thought fit to extend our priestly care to make known to you the fulness of the christian faith; to the end that, informing you of the gospel of Christ, which our Saviour commanded should be preached to all nations, they might offer to you the remedies of salvation.

"Thus the goodness of the Supreme Majesty, which by the only Word of his command made and created all things, the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, disposing the order by which they should subsist, hath, with the counsel of his co-eternal Word, and the unity of the Holy Spirit, formed man after his own image and similitude, out of the slime of the earth; and granted him such supereminent prerogative, as to place him above all others; so that, observing the term of the command which was given him, his continuance should be to eternity. This God,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which is an undivided Trinity,—mankind, from the east unto the west, by confession of faith to the saving of their souls, do worship and adore, as the Creator of all things, and their own Maker; to whom also the heights of empire, and the powers of the world, are subject, because the bestowal of all kingdoms is granted by his disposition. It hath pleased him, therefore, of his great mercy, and for the greater benefit of all his creatures, by the warmth of his Holy Spirit wonderfully to kindle the cold hearts even of the nations seated at the extremities of the earth in the knowledge of himself.

§ 116. "For we suppose your excellency has, from the country lying so near, fully understood what the clemency of our Redeemer has effected in the enlightening of our glorious son, king Audubald,[2] and the nations under his subjection; we therefore trust, with assured

[1] As pope Boniface V. was buried 25th Oct. 625, this letter must have been written before that date. There is therefore some little inaccuracy in the order of Beda's narrative at this point, since he places this letter after events which occurred in the previous year.

[2] Boniface had about the same period addressed a letter to archbishop Justus of Canterbury, congratulating him on the conversion of Eadbald. See Malmesb. De Gestis Pontiff. ap. Saville, fol. 112, b.; Twysden, col. 1749.

confidence, that his wonderful gift will be also conferred on you, by the long-suffering of Heaven; since we understand that your illustrious consort, who is known to be a part of your body, is illuminated with the reward of eternity, through the regeneration of holy baptism. We have, therefore, taken care by these presents, with all possible affection, to exhort your illustrious selves, that, abhorring idols and their worship, and contemning the follies of their temples, and the deceitful flatteries of auguries, you would believe in God the Father Almighty, and his Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, to the end that, being discharged from the bonds of captivity to the devil, by believing you may, through the co-operating power of the holy and undivided Trinity, be partakers of the eternal life.

§ 117. "How great is the guilt which they lie under, who adhere to the pernicious superstition and worship of idolatry, appears by the examples of the perdition of those whom they worship. Wherefore it is said of them by the Psalmist, 'All the gods of the Gentiles are devils, but the Lord made the heavens.' [Ps. xcvi. 5.] And again, 'They have eyes and do not see, they have ears and do not hear, they have noses and do not smell, they have hands and do not feel, they have feet and do not walk. Therefore they are like those that confide in them.' [Ps. cxv. 5.] For how can they have any power to yield assistance to any one, that are made for you out of corruptible matter, by the hands of your inferiors and subjects; to wit, on whom you have by human art bestowed an inanimate similitude of members? Who, unless they be moved by you, will not be able to walk; but, like a stone fixed in one place, being so formed, and having no understanding, but absorbed in insensibility, have no power of doing harm or good. We cannot, therefore, upon mature deliberation, find out how you come to be so deceived as to follow and worship those gods, to whom you yourselves have given the likeness of a body.

§ 118. "It behoves you, therefore, by taking upon you the sign of the holy cross, by which the human race is redeemed, to root out of your hearts all those arts and cunning of the devil, who is ever jealously envious of the works of the Divine goodness, and to lay hold and to crush and break in pieces those which you have hitherto made your material gods. For the very destruction and abolition of these, which never drew the breath of life, nor could ever receive sensation from their makers, may plainly demonstrate to you what a nothingness they are which you till then had worshipped, when you yourselves, who have received a living spirit from the Lord, are certainly better than they, as Almighty God has appointed you to be descended, after many ages and through many generations, from the first man whom He formed. Draw near, then, to the knowledge of Him who created you, who breathed into you the breath of life, who sent his only-begotten Son for your redemption, to cleanse you from original sin, that being delivered from the power of the devil's wickedness, He might bestow on you a heavenly reward.

§ 119. "Hear the words of the preachers, and the gospel of God, which they declare to you; to the end that, believing, as has

been said, in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ his Son, and the Holy Ghost, and the indivisible Trinity, having put to flight the sensualities of devils, and driven from you the suggestions of the venomous and deceitful enemy, and being born again by water and the Holy Ghost, you may, through his assistance and bounty, dwell in the brightness of eternal glory with Him in whom you shall believe. We have, moreover, sent you the blessing of your protector, the blessed Peter, prince of the apostles, that is, a shirt, with one gold ornament, and one garment of Ancyra, which we pray your highness to accept with the same good-will as it is friendly sent by us."

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CHAP. XI. [A.D. 625.]—POPE BONIFACE ADVISES THE QUEEN TO USE HER BEST ENDEAVOURS FOR THE SALVATION OF HER CONSORT.

§ 120. THE same pope also wrote to king Aeduin's consort, Aedilberga, to this effect:—

The Copy of the Letter of the most blessed and apostolic Boniface, Pope of the City of Rome, sent to Aedilberga, King Aeduini's Queen.

"*To the illustrious Lady his daughter, Queen Aedilberga, Boniface, Bishop, servant of the servants of God.* The goodness of our Redeemer has offered the means of salvation of his great providence to the human race, which He rescued, by the shedding of his precious blood, from the bonds of captivity to the devil; so that making his name known in divers ways to the Gentiles, they might acknowledge their Creator by embracing the mystery of the christian faith. This thing, the mystical purification of your regeneration plainly shows to have been bestowed upon the mind of your highness by God's bounty. Our mind, therefore, has been much rejoiced in the benefit of our Lord's goodness, for that He has vouchsafed, by your confession, to kindle a spark of the orthodox religion, by which He might the more easily inflame by his love the understanding, not only of your glorious consort, but also of all the nation that is subject to you.

§ 121. "For we have been informed by those, who came to acquaint us with the laudable conversion of our illustrious son, king Audubald, that your highness, also, having received the wonderful sacrament of the christian faith, continually shines in the performance of works pious and acceptable to God; that you likewise carefully refrain from the worship of idols, and the deceits of temples and auguries, and having changed your devotion, are so wholly taken up with the perfected love of your Redeemer, as never to cease lending your assistance for the propagation of the christian faith. And our fatherly charity having earnestly inquired concerning your illustrious husband, we were given to understand, that he still served abominable idols, and still delayed to yield obedience or give ear to the voice of the preachers. This occasioned us no small grief, for that part of your body still remained a stranger to the knowledge of the supreme and undivided Trinity. Whereupon we, in our fatherly care,

did not delay to admonish your christian highness, exhorting you, that, with the help of the Divine inspiration, you will not defer to do that which, both in season and out of season, is required of us; that with the co-operating power of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, your husband also may be added to the number of Christians; to the end that you may thereby enjoy the rights of marriage in the bond of a holy and unblemished union. For it is written, 'They two shall be in one flesh.' [Gen. ii. 24.] How, then, can it be said that there is unity between you, if he continues a stranger to the brightness of your faith, by the interposition of dark and detestable error?

§ 122. "Wherefore, applying yourself to continuous prayer, do not cease to beg of the long-suffering of the Divine Mercy the benefit of his illumination; to the end, that those whom the union of carnal affection has made in a manner but one body, may, after death, continue in perpetual union, by the bond of faith. Persist, therefore, illustrious daughter, and to the utmost of your power endeavour to soften the hardness of his heart by insinuating the Divine precepts; making him sensible how noble the mystery is which you have received by believing, and how wonderful is the reward which, by the new birth, you have merited to obtain. Inflame the coldness of his heart by the knowledge of the Holy Ghost, that by the removal of the cold and most pernicious worship of paganism, the heat of Divine faith may enlighten his understanding through your frequent exhortations; that the testimony of the holy Scripture may appear the more conspicuous, being fulfilled by you, 'The unbelieving husband shall be saved by the believing wife.' [1 Cor. vii. 14.] For to this effect you have obtained the mercy of our Lord's goodness, that you may return to your Redeemer with increase the fruit of faith, and the benefits entrusted to your hands; for through the assistance of his mercy we do not cease with frequent prayers to beg that you may be able to perform the same.

§ 123. "Having premised thus much, in pursuance of the duty of our fatherly affection, we exhort you, that when the opportunity of a bearer shall offer, you will as soon as possible acquaint us with the success which the Divine Power shall grant by your means in the conversation of your consort, and of the nation subject to you; to the end, that our solicitude, which earnestly expects what appertains to the salvation of you and all of yours, may, by hearing from you, be set at rest; and that we, discerning more fully the brightness of the Divine propitiation diffused in you, may with a joyful confession abundantly return due thanks to God, the Giver of all good things, and to St. Peter, the prince of apostles. We have, moreover, sent you the blessing of your protector, St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, that is, a silver looking-glass, and a gilt ivory comb, which we entreat your glory will receive with the same kind affection as it is known to be sent by us."

CHAP. XII. [A.D. 626.]—KING AEDUINI IS PERSUADED TO BELIEVE BY A VISION WHICH HE HAD SEEN WHEN HE WAS IN EXILE.

§ 124. THUS the aforesaid pope Boniface wrote for the salvation of king Aeduini and his nation. But a heavenly vision, which the Divine Mercy was pleased formerly to reveal to this king, when he was in banishment at the court of Redualdi,[1] king of the Angles, was of no little use in urging his mind to embrace and understand the doctrines of salvation. Paulinus, therefore, perceiving that it was a difficult task to incline the king's lofty mind to the humility of the way of salvation, and to embrace the mystery of the life-giving cross, and at the same time using both exhortation with men, and prayer to God, for his and his subjects' salvation; at length, as we may probably suppose, it was shown him in spirit what was the vision that had been formerly revealed from Heaven to the king. Nor did he lose any time, but immediately admonished the king to perform the vow which he made, when he received the oracle, promising to put the same in execution, if he were delivered from the trouble he was at that time under, and should be advanced to the throne.

§ 125. The vision was this. When Aedilfrid, his predecessor, was persecuting him,[2] he for many years wandered in a private manner through several places and kingdoms, and at last came to Reduald, beseeching him to give him protection against the snares of his powerful persecutor. Reduald willingly admitted him, and promised to perform what he requested. But when Aedilfrid understood that he had appeared in that province, and that he and his companions were hospitably entertained by Reduald, he sent messengers to offer that king a great sum of silver to murder him, but without effect. He sent a second and a third time, bidding more and more each time, and threatening to make war on him if he refused. Reduald, either terrified by his threats, or gained by his gifts, complied with his request, and promised either to kill Aeduini or to deliver him up to the ambassadors. This being observed by a trusty friend of his, he went into his chamber, where he was going to bed, for it was the first hour of the night; and, calling him out of doors, informed him what the king had promised to do with him, adding, "If, therefore, you think fit, I will this very hour conduct you out of this province, and lead you to a place where neither Reduald nor Aedilfrid shall ever find you." He answered, "I thank you for your good will, yet I cannot do what you propose, nor can I be the first to be guilty of breaking the compact I have made with so great a king, when he has done me no harm, nor offered me any injury as yet; but, on the con-

[1] Redwald's kingdom of East Anglia included the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge, and a portion of Bedford. The incident here mentioned must have occurred in or before 617, in which year Redwald died, and was succeeded by Eorpwald and Rægnhere.

[2] Edwin, upon the death of his father, Ella, king of Deira, being only three years old, was exposed to the tyranny of his brother-in-law Ethelfrid, king of Bernicia. He afterwards fled to the court of Cearl, king of Mercia, whose daughter Quoenberga he married; but that monarch proving faithless, he sought the protection of Redwald, king of East Anglia.

trary, if I must die, let it rather be by his hand than by that of any meaner person. For whither shall I now fly, when I have for the course of so many years been a vagabond through all the provinces of Britain, to escape the hands of my enemies?" His friend being gone, Aeduini remained alone without, and sitting with a heavy heart before the palace, began to be overwhelmed with many thoughts, not knowing what to do, or which way to turn himself.

§ 126. When he had remained a long time in silence, brooding over his misfortunes in anguish of mind, he, on a sudden, in the dead of night, saw approaching a person whose face and habit were equally strange; at sight of whom, as one unknown and unexpected, he was not a little frightened. The stranger coming close up, saluted him, and asked him, "Why he sat there alone and melancholy on a stone at that time, when all others were taking their rest, and were fast asleep?" Aeduini, in his turn, asked, "What it was to him, whether he spent the night within doors or abroad?" The stranger, in reply, said, "Do not think that I am ignorant of the cause of your grief, your watching, and sitting alone without. For I most certainly know who you are, and why you grieve, and the evils which you fear will fall upon you. But tell me what reward you will give the man (if there be any such) that shall deliver you out of this anguish, and persuade Redualdneither to do you any harm himself, nor to deliver you up to be murdered by your enemies." Aeduini replied, "That he would give that person all that he was able for so singular a favour." The other further added, "What if I also assure you, that you shall overcome your enemies, and surpass in power, not only all your own progenitors, but even all that have reigned before you over the nation of the Angles?" But Aediuni, encouraged by these questions, did not hesitate to promise that he would make a suitable return to him who should so highly oblige him. Then said the other, "But if he who shall truly foretell so much good as is to befal you, can also give you better advice for your life and salvation than any of your progenitors or kindred ever heard of, do you consent to submit to him, and to follow his wholesome counsel?" Aeduini did not hesitate immediately to promise that he would in all things follow the directions of that man who should deliver him from so many and so great calamities, and raise him to a throne.

Having received this answer, the person that talked to him laid his right hand upon his head, saying, "When this sign shall happen, remember this present occurrence and the discourse that has passed between us, and do not delay the performance of what you now promise." Having uttered these words, he is said to have immediately vanished, so that the king might understand it was not a man that had appeared to him, but a spirit.

§ 127. Whilst the royal youth still sat there alone, glad of the comfort which he had received, but very anxiously and seriously considering who he was, or whence he came, that had so talked to him, his above-mentioned friend came to him, and saluting him with a pleased countenance, "Rise," said he, "go in, and casting aside your care and anxiety, compose your body and your spirit to sleep

without fear; for the king's resolution is altered, and he designs to do you no harm, but rather to perform the promise which he made you. For when he had privately acquainted the queen with his intention of doing what I told you before, she dissuaded him from it, declaring it was utterly unworthy of so great a king to sell his good friend, when in such distress, for gold; and to sacrifice his honour, which is more valuable than all other ornaments, for the lucre of money." In short, the king did as he was advised, and not only refused to deliver up the banished man to his enemy's messengers, but assisted him to recover his kingdom. For as soon as the ambassadors were returned home, he raised a mighty army to make war on Aedilfrid; who, meeting him with much inferior forces, (for Reduald had not given him time to gather and unite all his power,) was slain on the borders of the kingdom of Mercia, on the east side of the river that is called Idlae.[1] In this battle, Reduald's son, called Raegenheri, was killed; and thus Aeduin, pursuant to the oracle he had received, not only escaped the snares of the king his enemy, but, by his death, succeeded him in the throne.

§ 128. King Aeduin, therefore, delaying to receive the word of God at the preaching of Paulinus, and using for some time, as has been said, to sit several hours alone, and seriously to ponder with himself what he ought to do, and what religion he should follow, the man of God came to him, laid his right hand on his head, and asked, "Whether he knew that sign?" The king, in a trembling condition, was ready to fall down at his feet, but he raised him up, and in a familiar voice, said to him, "Behold, by the help of God you have escaped the hands of the enemies whom you feared. Behold, you have of his gift obtained the kingdom which you desired. Take heed not to delay that third thing which you promised to perform; embrace the faith, and keep the precepts of Him who, delivering you from temporal adversity, has raised you to the honour of a temporal kingdom; and if, from this time forward, you shall be obedient to his will, which through me He signifies to you, He will not only deliver you from the everlasting torments of the wicked, but also make you a partaker with Him of his eternal kingdom in heaven."

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CHAP. XIII. [A.D. 627.]—OF THE COUNCIL HE HELD WITH HIS CHIEF MEN ABOUT EMBRACING THE FAITH OF CHRIST, AND HOW HIS HIGH PRIEST PROFANED HIS OWN ALTARS.

§ 129. THE king, hearing these words, answered, that he was both willing and bound to receive the faith which he taught; but that he would confer about it with princes who were at amity with him, and with his counsellors, to the end that if they also were of his opinion, they might all together be consecrated to Christ in the fountain of Life. Paulinus consenting, the king did as he said; for, holding a council with the wise men, he asked of every one in

[1] The Idle, a small river in Nottinghamshire, falling into the Trent. See Camd. Brit. col. 583. This battle was fought, according to the Saxon Chronicle, in 617.

particular what he thought of the hitherto unheard doctrine, and the new worship that was preached? To which the chief of his own priests, Coifi,[1] immediately answered, "O king, consider what this is which is now preached to us; for I verily declare to you that as to my own experience, the religion which we have hitherto professed has no power nor utility in it. For none of your people has applied himself more diligently to the worship of our gods than I; and yet there are many who receive greater favours and higher honours from you than I do, and are more prosperous in all their undertakings. Now, if the gods were good for anything, they would rather assist me, who have been most careful to serve them. It remains, therefore, if upon examination you find those new doctrines, which are now preached to us, better and more efficacious, for us immediately to receive them without any delay."

§ 130. Another of the king's chief men, approving his words and exhortations, presently added: "The present life of man upon earth, O king, seems to me, in comparison of that time which is unknown to us, like to the swift flight of a sparrow through the room wherein you sit at supper in winter, with your commanders and ministers, a good fire having been lit in the midst, and the room made warm thereby, whilst storms of rain and snow rage abroad; the sparrow, I say, flying in at one door, and immediately out at another, whilst he is within, is safe from the wintry storm; but after a short space of fair weather, soon passed over, he immediately vanishes out of your sight into the dark winter from which he had emerged. So this life of man appears for a short space; but of what went before, or what is to follow, we are utterly ignorant. If, therefore, this new doctrine contains something more certain, it seems justly to deserve to be followed." The other elders and king's counsellors, by Divine inspiration, spoke to the same effect.

§ 131. But Coifi added, that he wished more attentively to hear Paulinus discourse concerning the God whom he preached; which he having by the king's command performed, Coifi, hearing his words, cried out, "I have long since been sensible that that which we worshipped was nothing; because the more diligently I sought after truth in that worship, the less I found it. But now I openly confess, that such truth evidently appears in this preaching as can confer on us the gifts of life, of salvation, and of eternal happiness. For which reason I advise, O king, that we instantly abjure and set fire to those temples and altars which we have consecrated without reaping any benefit from them." In short, the king publicly gave his licence to Paulinus to preach the gospel, and renouncing idolatry, declared that he received the faith of Christ: and when he inquired of the aforesaid high priest of his religion who should first profane the altars and temples of their idols, with the enclosures that were about them, he answered, "I will; for who can more properly than myself destroy those things which I worshipped through ignorance, for an example to all others, through the

[1] The attempt has been made to recognise in this Saxon high priest a British Druid; but the theory is untenable. History and etymology alike oppose it.

wisdom which has been given me by the true God?" Then immediately, casting aside his former vain superstitions, he desired the king to furnish him with arms and a stallion; and mounting the same, he set out to destroy the idols; for it was not lawful before for the high priest either to carry arms, or to ride on any but a mare. Having, therefore, girt a sword about him, with a spear in his hand, he mounted the king's stallion and proceeded to the idols. The multitude, beholding it, concluded he was distracted; but he lost no time, for as soon as he drew near the temple, he profaned the same, casting into it the spear which he held; and greatly rejoicing in the knowledge of the worship of the true God, he commanded his companions to destroy the temple, with all its enclosures, by fire. This place where the idols were is still shown, not far from York, to the eastward, beyond the river Derwent, and is now called Godmunddingaham,[1] where the high priest himself, by the inspiration of the true God, profaned and destroyed the altars which he had himself consecrated.

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### Chap. XIV. [A.D. 627.]—King Aeduini and his Nation become Christians; and where Paulinus baptized them.

§ 132. Thus king Aeduini, with all the nobility of his nation, and a very large number of the common sort, received the faith, and the washing of holy regeneration, in the eleventh year of his reign, which is the year of the incarnation of our Lord 627, and about one hundred and eighty after the coming of the English into Britain. He was baptized at York, on the holy day of Easter,[2] being the day before the ides of April, [12th April,] in the church of St. Peter the apostle, which he himself had there built of timber, whilst he was being catechised and instructed in order to receive baptism. In that city also he appointed the see for the bishopric of his instructor and bishop, Paulinus. But as soon as he was baptized, he took care, by the direction of the same Paulinus, to build in the same place a larger and nobler church of stone, in the midst whereof that same oratory which he had first erected should be enclosed.[3] Having, therefore, laid the foundation, he began to build the church square, encompassing the former oratory. But before the walls were raised to the proper height, the wicked assassination of the king left that work to be finished by

[1] Godmanham, on the river Derwent, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, its name signifying "the residence of the protection of the gods." Not far distant is the small town called Wighton, (*i.e.* Wig-ton,) "the town of the altar." See Camd. Brit. col. 890; Grimm's Mytholog. p. 52.

[2] See ch. ix. of this present book as to the periods on which baptism was administered.

[3] "Parts of this fabric were discovered beneath the choir of the present cathedral during the repairs rendered necessary by the mad act of the incendiary Jonathan Martin. In the first number of Browne's 'History of the Edifice of the Metropolitan Church of St. Peter, York,' in Plate III. is given a plan of Paulinus' second edifice; where the probable position of the wooden baptistery, enclosing a spring still remaining, is pointed out."—Rev. A. Poole's Lectures on Churches, p. 22. 12mo. Lond. 1845.

Osuald his successor. Paulinus, for the space of six whole years from that time, that is, till the end of the reign of that king, by his consent and favour, preached the word of God in that province, and all that were preordained to eternal life believed and were baptized. Among whom were Osfrid and Eadfrid, king Eaduin's sons, who were both born to him whilst he was in banishment, of Quoenberga, the daughter of Cearl, king of the Mercians.

§ 133. Afterwards other children of his by queen Aedilberga were baptized, viz. Aedilhun and his daughter Aedilthryd, and auother, Vuscfrea, a son; the first two of whom were snatched out of this life whilst they were still in their white [1] garments, and buried in the church at York.[2] Yffi, the son of Osfrid, was also baptized, and many other noble and royal personages. So great was then the fervour of the faith, as is reported, and the desire of the washing of salvation, among the nation of the Northumbrians, that Paulinus at a certain time coming with the king and queen to the royal country-seat, which is called Adgefrin,[3] stayed there with them thirty-six days, fully occupied in catechising and baptizing; during all which days, from morning till night, he did nothing else but instruct the people resorting thither from all villages and places, in Christ's saving word; and when instructed, he washed them with the water of remission in the river Glen,[4] which is close by. This vill, under the following kings, was abandoned, and another was built instead of it, at the place called Maelmin.[5]

These things happened in the province of the Bernicians; but in that of the Deiri also, where he was wont more frequently to reside with the king, he baptized in the river Sualua, which runs by the village of Cataract;[6] for as yet oratories, or baptisteries, could not be built in the early infancy of the church in those parts. But he built a church in Campodonum,[7] where at that time there was also a royal vill; which afterwards the pagans, by whom king Aeduini was slain, burnt, together with all the said vill. In the place of which the later kings built themselves a country-seat in the region called

[1] It was a custom in the ancient church that the candidates for baptism should present themselves clothed in white garments, and these were worn for eight days after the rite had been performed. See Bingham, book xii. ch. iv. § 3.

[2] This is remarkable, since to bury in a church was not according to the usage of the period. It may be probably inferred, however, from a comparison with § 147, that they were buried in the porch of St. Gregory.

[3] One of the Cheviot hills, in the neighbourhood of Wooler, in Northumberland, is called Yevering, on the top of which traces of ancient buildings are, or were until lately, visible. Camd. Brit. col. 1097; Hutch. Northumb. i. 246.

[4] The river Glen, in its passage through the district, gives the name to the division called Glendale.

[5] The position of Maelmin is uncertain; for although it is generally understood to be represented by the modern Millfield, there seems no adequate authority for the assertion. A trace of the memory of Paulinus might be discovered in the name of Palinsburn, in the same neighbourhood; but the antiquity of this name is uncertain.

[6] The Roman Cataractonium, three miles below Richmond, in Yorkshire. See Camd. Brit. col. 921; Whittaker's Richmond, ii. 21.

[7] According to Camden, (col. 855,) near Almondbury, within six miles of Halifax. But as the Saxon paraphrase gives "Donafelda" as the vernacular rendering of Beda's Campodonum, Dr. Gale and other antiquaries give the preference to Tanfield on the Swale, id. col. 920; Archæolog. i. 221.

Loidis.[1] But the altar, being of stone, escaped the fire, and is still preserved in the monastery of the most reverend abbat and priest, Thryduulf, which is in Elmete wood.[2]

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CHAP. XV. [ABOUT A.D. 627.]—HOW THE PROVINCE OF THE EAST ANGLES RECEIVED THE FAITH OF CHRIST.

§ 134. AEDUINI was so zealous for the worship of the truth, that he likewise persuaded Earpuald,[3] king of the East Saxons, and son of Reduald, to abandon his idolatrous superstitions, and with his whole province to receive the faith and sacraments of Christ. And indeed his father Reduald had long before been admitted to the sacraments of the christian faith in Kent, but in vain; for on his return home, he was seduced by his wife and certain perverse teachers, and turned back from the sincerity of the faith; and thus his latter state was worse than the former; so that, like the ancient Samaritans, he seemed at the same time to serve Christ and the gods whom he had served before; and in the same temple he had an altar for the sacrifice of Christ, and another small one to offer victims to devils; which temple, Alduulf,[4] king of that same province, who lived in our period, testifies had stood until his time, and that he had seen it when he was a boy. The aforesaid king Reduald was noble by birth, though ignoble in his actions, being the son of Tytilus, whose father was Uuffa, from whom the kings of the East Angles are called Uuffings.

§ 135. Earpuald was, not long after he had embraced the faith, slain by one Ricberct, a pagan; and from that time the province was under error for three years, till the crown came into the possession of Sigberct, [A.D. 631,] brother to the same Earpuald, in every respect a most christian and learned man, who was banished, and went to live in France during his brother's life, and was there admitted to the sacraments of the faith, whereof he made it his business to cause all his province to partake as soon as he came to the throne. His exertions were most nobly promoted by the bishop Felix,[5] who, coming to Honorius, the archbishop, from Burgundy, where he had been born and ordained, and having told him what he desired, he sent him to preach the Word of life to the aforesaid nation of the Angles. Nor were his good wishes in vain; for the pious husbandman of the spiritual field reaped therein a large harvest of believers, delivering all that province (according to the hidden signification of his name, Felix) from long iniquity and

[1] This royal residence was at Oswinthorp; see Thoresby's Leeds, p. 108, ed. 1816.

[2] Possibly Berwick-in-Elmet. See Camd. col. 862.

[3] Earpuald succeeded his father Redwald in 617, and died in 628, his conversion having probably occurred in the previous year. The chronology, however, of these events is obscure and uncertain.

[4] He reigned from 663 to 713, in which year he died, according to the Annales Laureshamenses, printed by Pertz. See Lappenb. i. 36.

[5] The chief incidents of the life of Felix are collected and commented upon by the Bollandists, March, tom. i. p. 779. He commenced preaching in East Anglia A.D. 630, and died in 647. Wharton, Angl. Sacr. i. 403.

infelicity, and bringing it to the faith and works of righteousness, and the gifts of everlasting happiness. He had the see of his bishopric appointed him in the city Domnoc,[1] and having presided over the same province with pontifical authority seventeen years, he ended his days there in peace.

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CHAP. XVI. [A.D. 628.]—HOW PAULINUS PREACHED IN THE PROVINCE OF LINDISSI; AND OF THE REIGN OF AEDUINI.

§ 136. PAULINUS also preached the Word to the province of Lindissi,[2] which is the first on the south side of the river Humber, stretching out as far as the sea; and he first converted to the Lord the governor of the city of Lincoln, whose name was Blaecca, with his family. He likewise built, in that city, a stone church of beautiful workmanship; the roof of which having either fallen through long want of care, or been thrown down by enemies, the walls are still to be seen standing, and every year some miraculous cures are wrought in that place, for the benefit of those who faithfully seek the same. In that church, Justus having departed to Christ, Paulinus consecrated Honorius as bishop in his stead, as will be hereafter mentioned in its proper place. A certain abbat and priest of the monastery of Peartaneu,[3] a man of singular veracity, whose name was Deda, in relation to the faith of this province, told me that one of the oldest persons had informed him, that he himself had been baptized at noon-day, by the bishop Paulinus, in the presence of king Aeduin, with a great multitude of the people, in the river Trent, near the city which in the English tongue is called Tiouulfingacaestir;[4] and he was also wont to describe the personal appearance of the same Paulinus, that he was tall of stature, a little stooping, his hair black, his visage meagre, his nose very slender and aquiline, his aspect both venerable and majestic. He had also with him in the ministry, James, the deacon, a man of zeal and fame in Christ and the church, who lived even to our days.

§ 137. It is reported that there was then such perfect peace in Britain, wheresoever the dominion of king Aeduin extended, that, as is still proverbially said, a woman with her new-born babe might walk throughout the island, from sea to sea, if she would, without receiving any harm. That king took such care for the good of his nation, that in several places where he had seen clear springs near the highways, he caused stakes to be fixed, with brass dishes hanging at them, for the refreshment of travellers; nor durst any man touch them for any other purpose than that for which they were designed, either through the dread they had of the king, or for the affection which they bore him. His dignity was so great throughout his

[1] Afterwards Dunwich, in Suffolk, swept away by the incursion of the sea. See Camd. Brit. col. 448. The bishop's see was ultimately fixed at Norwich.

[2] One of the three portions into which the county of Lincoln is divided. Camd. Brit. col. 562.

[3] Bardney, in Lincolnshire. See Camd. Brit. col. 566; Monast. Anglic. i. 142.

[4] Camden places this at Southwell in Nottinghamshire, but upon evidence which is by no means conclusive. He is followed, however, by Smith.

dominions, that his banners were not only borne before him in battle; but even in time of peace, when he rode among his cities, vills, or provinces, with his officers, the standard-bearer was always wont to go before him. Also, wherever he walked along the streets, that sort of banner which the Romans call Tufa, and the English, Thuuf,[1] was in like manner borne before him.

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CHAP. XVII. [A.D. 634.]—THE SAME KING RECEIVES LETTERS OF EXHORTATION FROM POPE HONORIUS, WHO ALSO SENDS THE PALL TO PAULINUS.

§ 138. AT that time Honorius,[2] successor to Boniface, was prelate of the apostolic see, who, when he understood that the nation of the Northumbrians, with their king, had been, by the preaching of Paulinus, converted to the faith and confession of Christ, sent the pall to the said Paulinus, and with it letters of exhortation to king Aeduin, exciting him, with fatherly charity, that his people should persist in and profess the faith of truth, which they had received. The contents of which letter were as follow:—

§ 139. "*To his most excellent Lord and noble Son, Aeduin, King of the Angles, Bishop Honorius, servant of the servants of God, greeting.* The integrity of your christian character, in the worship of your Creator, is so much inflamed with the fire of faith, that it shines out far and near, and, being reported throughout the world, brings forth plentiful fruits of your labours. For your conduct as a king is based upon the knowledge which by orthodox preaching you have obtained of your God and Creator, whereby you believe and worship Him; and, as far as man is able, pay Him the sincere devotion of your mind. For what else shall we be able to offer to our God, but in endeavouring to worship, and to pay Him our vows, persisting in good actions, and confessing Him the Creator of mankind? And, therefore, most excellent son, we exhort you with such fatherly charity as is requisite, that with careful mind and constant prayers you every way labour to preserve this gift, that the Divine Mercy has vouchsafed to call you to his grace; to the end, that He, who has been pleased in this life to deliver you from all errors, and bring you to the knowledge of his name, may likewise prepare for you mansions in the heavenly country. Employing yourselves, therefore, in frequently reading the works of my lord Gregory, your preacher, of apostolical memory, represent before yourself the tenderness of his doctrine, which he zealously employed for the sake of your souls; that his prayers may increase your kingdom and people, and present you blameless before Almighty God. We shall prepare with a willing mind immediately to grant those things which you hoped would be by us ordained for your priests, which we do on account of the sincerity of your faith, which has been often made known to us in terms of praise by the bearers of these presents. We have sent two palls to the two metropolitans, Honorius and Paulinus; to the intent, that when either of them

[1] The Tufa, mentioned by Vegetius, (quoted by Smith,) was a tuft of feathers affixed to a spear.

[2] Honorius I. succeeded Boniface V. Nov. 3, 625, and was buried 12th Oct. 638.

shall be called out of this world to his Creator, the other may, by this authority of ours, substitute another bishop in his place; which privilege we are induced to grant, as well in regard to your charitable affection, as of the large and extensive provinces which lie between us and you; that we may in all things afford our concurrence to your devotion, according to your desires. May God's grace preserve your excellency in safety!"[1]

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CHAP. XVIII. [A.D. 634?]—HONORIUS, WHO SUCCEEDED JUSTUS IN THE BISHOPRIC OF CANTERBURY, RECEIVES THE PALL AND LETTERS FROM THE SAME POPE HONORIUS.

§ 140. IN the meantime, archbishop Justus[2] was taken up to the heavenly kingdom, on the fourth of the ides [10th] of November, and Honorius, who was elected to the see in his stead, came to Paulinus to be ordained, and meeting him at Lincoln was there consecrated the fifth prelate of the church of Canterbury from Augustine. To him also the aforesaid pope Honorius sent the pall, and a letter, wherein he ordains the same that he had before established in his epistle to king Aeduin, viz. that when either of the prelates of Canterbury or of York shall depart this life, the survivor of the same degree shall have power to ordain another priest in the room of him that is departed; that it might not be necessary always to travel to the city of Rome, at so great a distance by sea and land, in order to ordain an archbishop. A copy of which letter we have also thought fit to insert in this our history:—

§ 141. [A.D. 634.] "*Honorius to his most beloved brother Honorius.* Among the many good gifts which the mercy of our Redeemer is pleased to bestow on his servants, the munificent bounty of his love is never more conspicuous than when He permits us by brotherly intercourse, as it were face to face, to exhibit our mutual affection. For which gift we continually return thanks to his majesty; and we humbly beseech Him, that He will ever confirm your love in preaching the gospel, labouring and bringing forth fruit, and following the rule of your master and head, St. Gregory; and that, for the advancement of his church, He may by your means add further increase; to the end, that the souls already won by you and your predecessors, beginning with our lord Gregory, may grow strong, and be further extended by faith and works in the fear of God and in charity; that so the promises of the word of God may hereafter be brought to pass in you; and that this voice may call you away to the everlasting happiness; 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' [Matt. xi. 28.] And again, 'Well done, thou good and faithful

[1] This letter appears to have been written early in June, 634.

[2] There is some uncertainty as to the date of the death of Justus, and by consequence of king Edwin. Pagi refers the former event to 632 (A.D. 633, § 22); Wharton to 627 (Angl. Sacr. i. 92); Smith to 630. The Saxon Chronicle refers it to 627.

servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' [Matt. xxv. 21.] And we, most beloved brothers, premising these words of exhortation for the sake of eternal charity, do not hesitate further to grant those things which we perceive to be suitable for the privileges of your churches.

§ 142. "Wherefore, pursuant to your request, and to that of the kings our sons, we do by these our present precepts, in the name of St. Peter, prince of the apostles, grant you authority, that when the Divine Grace shall call either of you to Himself, the survivor shall ordain a bishop in the room of him that is deceased. To which effect also we have sent a pall to each of you, beloved, for celebrating the said ordination; that by the authority of our precept, you may make an ordination acceptable to God; because the long distance of sea and land that lies between us and you, has obliged us to grant you this, that no loss may happen to your church in any way, on account of any pretence whatever, but that the devotion of the people committed to you may be more fully extended. God preserve you in safety, most dear brother! Given the third of the ides [11th] of June, in the twenty-fourth year of the reign of our most pious emperor, Heraclius, and the twenty-third after his consulship; and in the twenty-third year of his son Constantine, and the third after his consulship; and in the third year of the most illustrious Cæsar, his son Heraclius; in the seventh indiction; that is, in the year of the incarnation of our Lord 634."[1]

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CHAP. XIX. [A.D. 634.]—HOW THE AFORESAID HONORIUS FIRST, AND AFTERWARDS JOHN, WROTE LETTERS TO THE NATION OF THE SCOTS, CONCERNING AS WELL THE OBSERVANCE OF EASTER, AS THE PELAGIAN HERESY.

§ 143. THE same pope Honorius also wrote to the nation of the Scots, whom he had found to err in the observance of Easter, as has been shown above, earnestly exhorting them not to esteem their small number, placed in the utmost borders of the earth, wiser than all the ancient and modern churches of Christ throughout the world; and not to celebrate a different Easter, contrary to the paschal calculation, and the synodical decrees of all the bishops upon earth. Likewise John,[2] who succeeded Severinus, successor to the same Honorius, being yet but pope elect, sent to them letters full of great authority and erudition for correcting the same error; evidently showing, that Easter Sunday is to be found between the fifteenth moon and the twenty-first, as was proved in the Council of Nice. He also in the same epistle admonished them to be careful to crush the Pelagian heresy, which he had been informed was reviving among them. The beginning of the epistle was as follows:—

§ 144. "*To our most beloved and most holy Tomianus,*[3] *Colum-*

[1] Many of the earlier chronologists stumbling at the date here assigned by Beda, endeavoured to amend it; but the accuracy of our historian is now firmly established; see Pagi ad an. 633, § 21, 22.

[2] John IV. was consecrated pope, 25 Dec. 640, and was buried 12 Oct. 642.

[3] Tomianus Mac Ronan (Annal. iv. Magr. A.D. 660) was bishop of Armagh in

*banus,*[1] *Cromanus,*[2] *Dimnaus,*[3] *and Baithanus,*[4] *bishops; to Cromanus,*[5] *Ernianus,*[6] *Laistranus,*[7] *Scellanus,*[8] *and Segenus,*[9] *priests; to Saranus*[10] *and the rest of the Scottish doctors, or abbats, health from Hilarius, the arch-priest, and keeper of the place of the holy Apostolic See; John, the deacon, and elect in the name of God; from John, the chief secretary and keeper of the place of the holy Apostolic See, and from John, the servant of God, and counsellor of the same Apostolic See.* The writings which were brought by the bearers to pope Severinus, of holy memory, were left, at his death, without an answer to the inquiries contained in them. Lest the obscurity of such intricate questions should remain unresolved, we opened the same, and found that some in your province, endeavouring to revive a new heresy out of an old one, contrary to the orthodox faith, do through ignorance reject our Easter, when Christ was sacrificed; and contend that the same should be kept on the fourteenth moon, with the Hebrews."

By this beginning of the epistle it evidently appears that this heresy sprang up among them of very late times, and that not all their nation, but only some of them, had fallen into the same.

§ 145. After having laid down the manner of keeping Easter, they add this concerning the Pelagians in the same epistle :—

"And we have also understood that the poison of the Pelagian heresy again springs up among you; we, therefore, exhort you, that you put away from your thoughts all such venomous and superstitious wickedness. For you ought not to be ignorant how that execrable heresy has been condemned; for it has not only been abolished these two hundred years, but it is also daily condemned and anathematized for ever by us; and we exhort you, now that the weapons of their controversy have been burnt, not to rake up the

630, when the synod of Lethglinn, relative to the celebration of Easter, was held, (Ussher, Antiq. p. 486,) and died in 661; Ann. Tigern. ad an.

[1] From the frequency of the name of Columbanus among the Irish, it is not easy to identify this individual; possibly he might be the bishop of Clunirard, who, according to the Ann. iv. Magr. died A.D. 652

[2] In some MSS. of good authority the name is written Cronanus; it, also, is exceedingly common. The individual here mentioned is supposed to have been bishop of Aondroma, who died 7 Jan. 642. Annal. iv. Magr. ad an.

[3] Or Dimaus, according to other copies. According to the Annals of Tigernach he died A.D. 659, being then bishop of Connor. The same authority mentions the death of a bishop Dimnaus, whose see is not specified, A.D. 663.

[4] Baithanus, bishop of Techbaithan, or Cluanmacnois, was the disciple of Columba, and is frequently mentioned in Adomnan's life of that saint.

[5] This name is written Cronanus, or Croemanus, in MSS. of authority. The Annals of Tigernach, under the year 650, record the death of a person of this name, possibly this same individual.

[6] Or Arnianus. He was a disciple of Columba, and abbot of a monastery built by that saint. Annal. iv. Magr. ad an. 616.

[7] In some MSS. Laistronus, or Laustranus. He was abbot of Lethglinn, and took a prominent part in the synod held A.D. 630, relative to the celebration of Easter; Ussher, pp. 484, 485. He died A.D. 639; Annal. Tigern. ad an.; Ussher, p. 486.

[8] Probably the "Sillanus episcopus Damhiniensis," whose death is mentioned in Annal. Tigern. as having happened A.D. 659.

[9] In MSS. of considerable authority he is called Segianus. He became abbot of Iona in A.D. 623, and is mentioned in Adomnan's Life of Columba. To him Cumman addressed the important epistle "De Controversia Paschali," printed by Ussher in his Sylloge, No. xi. He died A.D. 652; see Ussher, pp. 367, 502.

[10] Saranus, abbot of Othna Moire, is mentioned in the Annals of Tigernach, A.D. 658.

ashes among you. For who will not detest that insolent and impious proposition, 'That man can live without sin, of his own free will, and not through God's grace?' And in the first place, it is the folly of blasphemy to say that man is without sin, which none can be, but only the Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who was conceived and born without sin; for all other men, being born in original sin, are known to bear the mark of Adam's disobedience, even whilst they are without actual sin, according to the saying of the prophet, 'For behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.'" [Ps. li. 5.]

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CHAP. XX. [A.D. 633.]—HOW AEDUIN BEING SLAIN, PAULINUS RETURNS INTO KENT, AND RECEIVES THE BISHOPRIC OF ROCHESTER.

§ 146. AEDUINI reigned most gloriously seventeen years over the nations both of the English and the Britons, six whereof, as has been said, he also was a soldier in the kingdom of Christ. Caedualla,[1] king of the Britons, rebelled against him, being supported by Penda,[2] a most warlike man of the royal race of the Mercians, and who himself from that time governed that nation twenty-two years with various success. A great battle being fought in the plain that is called Haethfelth,[3] Aeduini was killed on the 4th of the ides of October [12 Oct.], in the year of our Lord's incarnation 633, being then forty-eight[4] years of age, and all his army was either slain or dispersed. In the same war also, before him, fell Osfrid, one of his sons, a warlike youth; Eadfrid, another of them, compelled by necessity, went over to king Penda, and was by him afterwards, in the reign of Osuald, slain, contrary to his oath.

§ 146. At this time a great slaughter was made in the church and nation of the Northumbrians; and the more so because one of the commanders, by whom it was done, was a pagan, and the other a barbarian, more cruel than a pagan; for Penda, with all the nation of the Mercians, was an idolater, and a stranger to the name of Christ; but Caedualla, though he bore the name and professed himself a Christian, was so barbarous in his disposition and behaviour, that he neither spared the female sex, nor the innocent age of children, but with savage cruelty put the whole of them to tormenting deaths, ravaging all their country for a long time, and resolving to cut off all the race of the English within the borders of Britain. Nor did he pay any respect to the christian religion, which had newly taken root among them; it being to this day the custom of the Britons not to pay any respect to the faith and religion of the English, nor to communicate with them any more than with pagans.[5]

[1] In the Annals of Tigernach he is called Chon, ad an. 631; in the Annales Cambriæ, (ap. Petrie and Hardy, p. 832,) Catguollaan.

[2] Penda, son of Wibba, king of Mercia, succeeded to the throne A.D. 633, (not in 626, as in the Saxon Chronicle,) and died in 655.

[3] Now Hatfield, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, Camd. col. 849. This battle is ascribed to A.D. 631, by the Annals of Ulster and Tigernach; to 14 Oct. 633, by the Saxon Chronicle; and to 10 Oct. 633, by Florence of Worcester.

[4] Some MSS. supported by the Saxon version, read "forty-seven."

[5] See book ii. ch. 4, § 98.

King Aeduini's head was brought to York, and placed afterwards in the church of St. Peter the apostle, which he had begun, but which his successor Osuald finished, as has been said before.[1] It was deposited in the porch of St. Gregory the pope, from whose disciples he had received the Word of life.

§ 148. The affairs of the Northumbrians being thus in confusion, by reason of this disaster, without any prospect of safety any where, except in flight, Paulinus, taking with him queen Aedilberge,[2] whom he had before brought thither, returned into Kent by sea, and was very honourably received by the archbishop Honorius and king Eadbald. He came thither under the conduct of Bassus, a most valiant soldier of king Aeduini, having with him Eanfleda, the daughter, Vuscfrea, the son of Aeduini, as also Yffi, the son of Osfrid, his son, whom afterwards the mother, for fear of kings Eadbald and Osuald, sent over into France to be bred up by king Daegberect,[3] who was her friend; and there they both died in infancy, and were buried in the church[4] with the honour due to royal children and to the innocents of Christ. He also brought with him many rich vessels of king Aeduini, among which were a large gold cross, and a golden chalice, dedicated to the use of the altar, which are still preserved, and shown in the church of Canterbury.

§ 149. At that time the church of Rochester had no bishop, for Romanus, the prelate thereof, being sent to pope Honorius, by archbishop Justus, as his legate, was drowned in the waves of the Italian sea; and thereupon, Paulinus, at the invitation of archbishop Honorius and king Eadbald, took upon him the charge of the same, and held it until he ascended up to heaven, with the glorious fruits of his labours; and, dying in that church, he left there the pall which he had received from the pope of Rome. He had left behind him in his church at York, James the deacon, a holy ecclesiastic; who continuing long after in that church, by teaching and baptizing, rescued much prey from the power of the old enemy of mankind; from whom the village,[5] where he mostly resided, near Cataract, has its name to this day. He was extraordinarily skilful in singing in the church, and when the province was afterwards restored to peace, and the number of the faithful increased, he, as a teacher of ecclesiastical chanting,[6] began to instruct many, according to the custom of the Romans, or of the Cantuarians. And being old and full of days, as the Scripture says, he went the way of his forefathers.

[1] See § 132.

[2] She became an inmate of the monastery of Liming, in Kent, which was founded for her use by her brother Eadbald; and dying, 10 Sept. 647, was canonized. See Monast. Anglic. i. 452, ed. Ellis.

[3] Dagobert I, king of France, whose brother Charibert was father of Bereta, Adilberga's mother.

[4] Mabillon (Annal. ord. S. Bened. xii. 37) conjectures that they were buried in the church of St. Denis, at Paris.

[5] Probably Akeburgh. See Whittaker's Richmondshire, ii. 21.

[6] Smith, in his Appendix, No. xii, gives a short account of the introduction and use of the Gregorian chant in England.

# BOOK III.

CHAP. I. [A.D. 633—634.]—HOW KING AEDUINI'S NEXT SUCCESSORS BETRAYED THE FAITH OF THEIR NATION, AND HOW THE MOST CHRISTIAN KING OSUALD RETRIEVED BOTH KINGDOMS.

§ 150. AEDUINI being slain in battle, the kingdom of Deira, to which province his family belonged, and where he first began to reign, devolved on Osric, the son of his uncle Aelfric, who, through the preaching of Paulinus, had also received the sacraments of the faith. But the kingdom of the Bernicians—for into these two provinces the nation of the Northumbrians was formerly divided—was possessed by Eanfrid, the son of Aedilfrid, who derived his origin and the commencement of his reign from that province. For all the time that Aeduini reigned, the sons of the aforesaid king Aedilfrid, who had reigned before him, with many of the youth of the nobility, lived in banishment among the Scots or Picts, and were there catechised according to the doctrine of the Scots, and regenerated by the grace of baptism. Upon the death of the king, their enemy, they were permitted to return home, and Eanfrid, as the first of them, mentioned above, became king of the Bernicians. Both those kings, as soon as they obtained the government of their earthly kingdoms, renounced and betrayed the sacraments of the heavenly kingdom, in which they had been initiated, and again delivered themselves up to be defiled and destroyed by the abominations of their former idols.

§ 151. [A.D. 634.] But soon after, the king of the Britons, Cadualla, slew them both, through the rightful vengeance of Heaven, though the act was base in him. He first slew Osric, the next summer; for, being rashly besieged by him in a strong town,[1] he sallied out on a sudden with all his forces, by surprise, and destroyed him and all his army. After this, for the space of a year, he reigned over the provinces of the Northumbrians, not like a victorious king; but like a rapacious tyrant he ravaged and destroyed them; and at length brought to the same end Eanfrid, who unadvisedly came to him with only twelve chosen soldiers, to sue for peace. To this day, that year is looked upon as unhappy and hateful to all good men; as well on account of the apostasy of the English kings, who had renounced the sacraments of their faith, as of the outrageous tyranny of the British king. Hence it has been agreed by all, in their calculations of the reigns of the kings, to abolish the memory of those perfidious monarchs, and to assign[2] that year to the reign of the following king, Osuald, a man beloved by God. He, after the death of his brother Eanfrid, advanced with an army, small, indeed, in number, but strengthened with the faith of Christ; and the impious commander of the Britons was

[1] Namely, the city of York, styled "Municipium" by Aurelius Victor, in his History of the Cæsars. See Drake's Eboracum, pp. 178, 179. [2] See § 175.

slain, though he had most numerous forces, which he boasted nothing could withstand, at a place in the English tongue called Denisesburna,[1] that is, Denis's-brook.

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CHAP. II. [A.D. 635.]—HOW, AMONG INNUMERABLE OTHER MIRACULOUS CURES WROUGHT BY THE WOOD OF THE CROSS, WHICH THE SAME KING, BEING READY TO ENGAGE AGAINST THE BARBARIANS, ERECTED, A CERTAIN MAN HAD HIS ACHING ARM HEALED.

§ 152. THE place is shown to this day, and held in much veneration, where Osuald, being about to engage, erected the sign of the holy cross, and on his bent knees prayed to the Lord that He would assist his worshippers in their great distress with succour from heaven. It is further reported, that the cross being made in haste, and the hole dug in which it was to be fixed, the king himself, full of faith, laid hold of it and placed it in the hollow, and held it up with both his hands, till it was set fast by the soldiers throwing in the earth; and this done, raising his voice, he cried to all his army, "Let us all kneel, and jointly beseech the true and living God Almighty, in his mercy, to defend us from the haughty and fierce enemy; for He knows that we have undertaken a just war for the safety of our nation." All did as he had commanded; and accordingly advancing towards the enemy with the first dawn of day, they obtained the victory, as their faith deserved. In that place of prayer, very many miraculous cures are known to have been performed, as a token and memorial of the king's faith; for even to this day, many are wont to cut off small chips from the wood of the holy cross, which being put into water, sick men or cattle drinking thereof, or sprinkled with that water, are immediately restored to health.

§ 153. The place[2] in the English tongue is called Hefenfelth, or the Heavenly Field, which name it had formerly received as a sure presage of what was afterwards to happen; denoting, that there the heavenly trophy would be erected, the heavenly victory begun, and heavenly miracles be wrought to this day. The same place is near the Wall to the north, with which the Romans formerly enclosed the whole island from sea to sea, to restrain the attacks of the barbarous nations, as has been said before. Hither also the brethren of the church of Hagustald,[3] which is not far from thence, repair yearly, according to ancient custom, on the day before that on which king Osuald was afterwards slain, to watch there for the health of his soul, and having sung many psalms, to offer for him in the morning the sacrifice of the holy oblation. And since that good custom has spread, they have lately built and consecrated a church there, which has attached additional sanctity and honour,

[1] Said to be Dilston, near Hexham, in Northumberland. See Smith's Appendix, No. xiii.

[2] The situation of this place is uncertain; but concerning it, and the church to which Beda presently alludes, the Appendix, No. xiii, to Smith's edition may be consulted.

[3] Its modern name is Hexham, where Wilfrid afterwards founded a monastery.

in the opinion of all, to that place: and this with good reason; for (as we have understood) there was no sign of the christian faith, no church, no altar erected throughout all the nation of the Bernicians, before that new commander of the army, prompted by the devotion of his faith, set up the banner of the cross as he was going to give battle to his barbarous enemy.

§ 154. Nor is it foreign to our purpose to relate one of the many miracles that have been wrought at this cross. One of the brethren of the same church of Hagustald, whose name is Bothelm, and who is still living, a few years since, walking carelessly on the ice at night, suddenly fell and broke his arm; a most raging pain commenced in the part so severely broken, so that he could not lift his arm to his mouth for the violence of the anguish. Hearing one morning that one of the brethren designed to go to the place of the same holy cross, he desired him, at his return, to bring him a portion of that venerable wood, saying, he believed that with the help of God he might thereby be healed. The brother did as he was desired; and returning in the evening, when the brethren were already sitting at table, gave him some of the old moss which covered the surface of the wood. As he sat at table, having no place to lay up that gift which was brought him, he put the same into his bosom; and forgetting when he went to bed[1] to put it by, he left it in his bosom. Awaking in the middle of the night, he felt something cold lying by his side, and putting his hand to feel what it was, he found his arm and hand as sound as if he had never felt any such pain.

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CHAP. III. [A.D. 635.]—HOW THE SAME KING, ASKING A BISHOP OF THE SCOTTISH NATION, HAD AEDAN SENT HIM, AND GRANTED HIM AN EPISCOPAL SEE IN THE ISLE OF LINDISFARNE.

§ 155. THE same Osuald, as soon as he ascended the throne, (being desirous that all the nation over which he had begun to rule should be imbued with the grace of the christian faith, whereof he had already found happy experience in vanquishing the barbarians,) sent to the elders of the Scots, among whom himself and his fellow-soldiers, when in banishment, had received the sacraments of baptism, desiring they would send him a bishop, by whose instruction and ministry the English nation, which he governed, might be taught the advantages of faith in the Lord, and receive its sacraments. Nor were they slow in granting his request; but sent him bishop Aedan, a man of singular meekness, piety, and moderation; zealous in the cause of God, though not altogether according to knowledge. For he was wont to keep Easter Sunday according to the custom of his country, which we have before so often mentioned, from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon; the northern province of the Scots, and all the nation of the Picts, celebrating Easter then after that manner, and believing that they therein

[1] It would hence appear that, at this time, monks did not undress themselves before going into bed.

followed the writings of the holy and praiseworthy father Anatolius;[1] the truth of which every skilful person can most easily discern. But the Scots which dwelt in the south of Ireland had long since,[2] by the admonition of the bishop of the apostolic see, learned to observe Easter according to the canonical custom.

§ 156. On the arrival of the bishop, the king appointed him his episcopal see in the isle of Lindisfarne,[3] as he himself desired. Which place, as the tide flows and ebbs twice a day, is enclosed by the waves of the sea like an island; and again, twice in the day, when the shore is left dry, becomes contiguous to the land. The king also humbly and willingly in all cases giving ear to his admonitions, most industriously applied himself to build and extend the church of Christ in his kingdom; wherein, when the bishop, who did not perfectly understand the English tongue, preached the gospel, it was most delightful to see the king himself interpreting the Word of God to his commanders and ministers, for he had perfectly learned the language of the Scots during his long banishment. From that time many from the region of the Scots came daily into Britain, and with great devotion preached the Word of faith to those provinces of the English over which king Osuald reigned, and those among them that had received priest's orders administered to the believers the grace of baptism. Churches were built in several places; the people joyfully flocked together to hear the Word; possessions and lands were given of the king's bounty to build monasteries; the younger English were by their Scottish masters instructed; and there were greater care and attention bestowed upon the rules and observance of regular discipline.

§ 157. Most of them that had come to preach were monks. Bishop Aedan was himself a monk of the island called Hii, whose monastery for a long time held the preeminence over almost all those of the northern Scots,[4] and all those of the Picts,[5] and had the direction of their people. That island belongs to the sway of Britain, being divided from it by a small arm of the sea, but had been long since given by the Picts,[6] who inhabit those parts of Britain, to the Scottish monks, because they had received the faith of Christ through their preaching.

[1] See § 232. Anatolius, bishop of Laodicea, flourished about the year 270, wrote a treatise upon the Paschal Canons. See Cave, Hist. Lit. i. 136.

[2] See book ii. ch. 19, § 143.

[3] Lindisfarne, or Holy Island, situated off the coast of Northumberland.

[4] As well the Scots who inhabit Ulster, in Ireland, as the Dalreodini who were seated in Britain.

[5] Ussher, and from him Mabillon, (Ann. Bened. viii. 8,) remark upon the inconsistency of Beda relative to the position of the Picts upon the north of the Clyde, which is apparent upon a comparison of this passage with § 7 of the present history.

[6] The Annals of Tigernach and Ulster here differ from Beda, and with greater probability state that Iona was given to Columba by Conan, the son of Comgal, king of Dalrieda, who died A.D. 574. See Adomn. Vit. Columb. i. 7; Ann. Tigern. A.D. 574; Ann. Ulton. A.D. 573 (574); Ussher, p. 367.

CHAP. IV. [A.D. 565.]—WHEN THE NATION OF THE PICTS RECEIVED THE FAITH.

§ 158. IN the year of our Lord's incarnation 565,[1] when Justin the younger, the successor of Justinian, had the government of the Roman empire, there came from Ireland into Britain a famous priest and abbat, a monk by habit and life, whose name was Columba,[2] to preach the Word of God to the provinces of the northern Picts, that is, to those who are separated from the southern parts by steep and rugged mountains;[3] for the southern Picts, who dwell among those mountains, had long before, (as is reported,) forsaken the errors of idolatry, and embraced the truth, by the preaching of the Word by Ninias,[4] a most reverend bishop and holy man of the British nation, who had been regularly instructed at Rome in the faith and mysteries of the truth; whose episcopal see and church, named after St. Martin the bishop, (wherein he and many other saints rest in the body,) is at this time in the possession of the English nation. The place belongs to the province of the Bernicians, and is generally called the White House,[5] because he there built a church of stone, which was not usual[6] among the Britons.

§ 159. Columba came into Britain in the ninth year of the reign, over the Picts, of Bridius,[7] who was the son of Meilochon, a very powerful king; and he converted that nation to the faith of Christ by his preaching and example, whereupon he also received of them the possession of the aforesaid island for a monastery, for it is not very large, but contains about five families, according to the English computation. His successors hold the island to this day; he was also buried therein,[8] having died at the age of seventy-seven, and about thirty-two years after he came into Britain to preach. Before he passed over into Britain, he had built a noble monastery in Ireland, which, from the great number of oaks, is in the Scottish tongue called Dearmach[9]—the Field of Oaks. From both which monasteries, many others had their beginning through

[1] Beda here appears to be in error as to the date of Columba's voyage into Britain. Two years after the battle of Culdrevan (A.D. 561, according to the Annals of Tigernach, see Ussher ad an.), Columba had arrived in Britain, and was in the court of Conall, the son of Comgill. Vit. Columbæ, i. 7; Ussher, pp. 367—370.

[2] On St. Columba, see the Acta Sanctorum, June, ii. 180.

[3] Namely, the Grampians.

[4] See the Acta Sanctorum, Septemb. v. 318.

[5] At Whiteherne, in Galloway.

[6] See "Churches, their Structure, Arrangement, and Decoration," by the Rev. G. A. Poole, pp. 20, 21; Reginald. de Mirac. S. Cuthberti, cap. 68; O'Connor, Rerum Hibern. Scriptt. ii. 86.

[7] This monarch is mentioned by Adomnan, Vit. Columb. If his reign commenced in 557, as there is reason to suppose it did, Beda is wrong in joining his ninth regnal year with Columba's voyage into Britain

[8] According to the better authority of Adomnan, iii. 22, 23, and Cuman, iii. 5, Columba died A.D. 596, and not in 597, as Beda seems to have believed. See Ussher ad an.

[9] Now Durrogh in King's County; frequently mentioned by Adomnan in his Life of Columba, Ann. Tigern. A.D. 589.

his disciples, both in Britain and Ireland; but the monastery in the island where his body lies, is the principal[1] of them all.

§ 160. That island has always by usage for its ruler an abbat, who is a priest, to whose direction all the province, and even the bishops,[2] contrary to the usual method, ought to be subject, according to the example of their first teacher, who was not a bishop, but a priest and monk;[3] of whose life and discourses some writings are said to be possessed by his disciples. But whatsoever he was himself, this we know for certain, that he left successors renowned for their great continence, their love of God, and observance of monastic rules. It is true they followed uncertain cycles in their observance of the great Festival, as having none to bring them the synodal decrees for the observance of Easter, by reason of their being so far away from the rest of the world; wherefore they only diligently practised such works of piety and chastity as they could learn from the prophetical, evangelical, and apostolical writings. This manner of keeping Easter continued among them for a considerable time, that is, for the space of 150 years,[4] till the year of our Lord's incarnation 715.

§ 161. [A.D. 715.] But then the most reverend and holy father and priest, Ecgberct, of the English nation, who had long lived in banishment in Ireland for the sake of Christ, and was most learned in the Scriptures, and renowned for long perfection of life, came among them, corrected their error, and changed them to the true and canonical day of Easter; the which they nevertheless did not always keep formerly on the fourteenth moon, with the Jews, as some imagined, but on Sunday, although not in the proper week. For, as Christians, they knew that the Resurrection of our Lord, which happened on the first day of the week, was always to be celebrated on the first day of the week; but being rude and barbarous, they had not learned when that same first day after the Sabbath, which is now called the Lord's day, should come. But because they have not laid aside the fervent grace of charity, they were worthy also to be informed in the perfect knowledge of this particular, according to the promise of the apostle, saying, "And if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." [Phil. iii. 15.] Of which we shall speak more fully in its proper place.

[1] It has been remarked by Mabillon (De Re Diplomat. p. 66, ed. 1789) and by others, that abbots were sometimes styled "principes" in the early Irish church. See the Irish canons published by D'Achery in his Spicilegium, i. 491, ed. 1723. In the Annals of Tigernach, A.D. 602, Comgall, abbot of Bangor, is said to have held his "principatus" for fifty years.

[2] Smith here remarks, that this did not extend to spiritual authority, and refers us to Adomnan's Life of Columba, i. 26.

[3] Much discussion has arisen from these words. The reader may consult the prefaces to Keith's Catalogue of Scottish Bishops, (8vo. Edinb. 1824;) Lloyd's Historical Account of Church Government, with Panton's Preface, (8vo. Oxf. 1842;) Alford, ad an. 395, § 6.

[4] Beda here appears to calculate from the date of Columba's arrival in Scotland in 563.

CHAP. V. [A.D. 635.]—OF THE LIFE OF BISHOP AEDAN.

§ 162. FROM the aforesaid island, and from this college of monks, was Aedan[1] sent to instruct the province of the Angles in Christ, having received the dignity of a bishop. At this time Segeni,[2] abbat and priest, presided over that monastery; whence, among other instructions for life, he left the clergy a most salutary example of abstinence and continence; it was the highest commendation of his doctrine, with all men, that he taught no otherwise than the life which he and his followers lived; for he neither cared to seek nor love anything of this world, but delighted in distributing immediately among the poor whom he met whatsoever was given him by the kings or rich men of the world. He was wont to traverse everywhere, both town and country, on foot, never on horseback, unless compelled by some urgent necessity; and wherever in his way he saw any, either rich or poor, immediately turning to them, he invited them, if infidels, to embrace the mystery of the faith; or if they were believers, to strengthen them in the faith, and to stir them up by words and actions to alms and good works.

§ 163. His course of life was so different from the slothfulness of our times, that all those who bore him company, whether they were shorn monks or laymen, were employed in meditation, that is, either in reading the Scriptures, or learning the psalms. This was the daily employment of himself and all that were with him, wheresoever they went; and if it happened, which was but seldom, that he was invited to banquet with the king, he went with one or two clerks, and having taken a small repast, made haste to be gone with them, either to read or to pray.[3] At that time, many religious men and women, stirred up by his example, adopted the custom of fasting on the fourth and sixth days of the week, till the ninth hour, throughout the year, except during the fifty days after Easter. He never spared the wealthy from fear or favour, if they erred in any point, but corrected them with a sharp rebuke. He never gave money to the powerful men of the world, but only meat, if he happened to entertain them; and, on the contrary, whatsoever gifts of money he received from the rich, he either distributed them, as has been said, to the use of the poor, or bestowed them in ransoming such as had been wrongfully sold for slaves. Moreover, he afterwards made many of those whom, having paid their value, he had ransomed, his disciples; and after having taught and instructed them, advanced them to the order of priesthood.

§ 164. It is reported, that when king Osuald had asked a bishop of the province of the Scots to minister the Word of faith to

[1] Since it appears by iii. 26, (§ 236,) that A.D. 664 was the 30th year of the episcopal government of Northumbria by the Scots from Iona, it follows that Aedan must have been consecrated bishop of Lindisfarne in 634 or 635. See Pagi, ad an. 634, § 6. See further concerning him, Acta SS. Aug. tom. vi. p. 668, and the Life in Raine's History of North Durham.

[2] Segeni, mentioned by Cummianus and Adomnanus, ruled over Iona from 623 to 652. See Ussher, p. 367, and before, ii. 19.

[3] Here "meditari" means to read attentively, as appears by the context, (see § 7,) and it is explained by the Rule of St. Isidore, cap. vi, where it is enjoined, "Post vespertinum autem, congregatis fratribus, oportet vel aliquid meditari, vel de aliquibus divinæ lectionis quæstionibus disputare."

him and his nation, there was first sent to him another[1] man of more austere disposition, who, after preaching for some time to the nation of the Angles, and meeting with no success, and being disregarded by the English people, returned home, and in an assembly of the elders reported, that he had not been able to do any good in instructing that nation he had been sent to preach to, because they were untameable men, and of a stubborn and barbarous disposition. They, as is testified, in a great council seriously debated what was to be done, being desirous of the good of the nation in the matter which it demanded, and grieving that they had not received the preacher sent to them. Then said Aedan, who was also present in the council, to the priest then spoken of,—"I am of opinion, brother, that you were more severe to your unlearned hearers than you ought to have been, and did not at first, conformably to the apostolic discipline, give them the milk of more gentle doctrine, till being by degrees nourished with the Word of God, they should be capable of greater perfection, and be able to practise God's sublimer precepts." Having heard these words, all who sat with him, turning on him their eyes, began diligently to weigh what he had said, and presently concluded, that he deserved to be made a bishop, and ought to be sent to instruct the unbelievers and unlearned, since he was found to be endued with the grace of a singular discretion, which is the mother of other virtues, and accordingly being ordained, they sent him to preach; and he, as time proved, afterwards appeared to possess all other virtues; as well as the discretion for which he was before remarkable.

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### CHAP. VI. [A.D. 635—642.]—OF KING OSUALD'S WONDERFUL RELIGION AND PIETY.

§ 165. KING OSUALD, with the nation of the English which he governed, being instructed by the teaching of this prelate, not only learned to hope for a heavenly kingdom unknown to his progenitors, but also obtained of the same one Lord, who made heaven and earth, larger earthly kingdoms than any of his ancestors. In short, he brought under his dominion all the nations and provinces of Britain, which are divided into four languages, namely, the Britons, the Picts, the Scots, and the English. When raised to that height of dominion, wonderful to relate, he nevertheless always continued humble, kind, and generous to the poor and strangers.

§ 166. In short, it is reported, that when he was once sitting at dinner, on the holy day of Easter, with the aforesaid bishop, and a silver dish full of royal dainties was placed upon the table before him, and they were just ready to stretch out their hands to bless the bread, his servant, whom he had appointed to relieve the poor, came in on a sudden, and told the king, that a great multitude of needy persons from all parts were sitting in the streets begging some alms of the king; he immediately ordered the meat set before

[1] Hector Boethius calls him Corman. Fordun (III. xliii.) recounts the transaction in Beda's own words.

himself to be carried to the poor, and the dish to be cut in pieces and divided piecemeal among them. At this sight, the bishop who sat by him, much delighted with such an act of piety, laid hold of his right hand, and said, "May this hand never grow old." Which fell out according to his prayer and blessing; for it happens that his arm and hand, being cut off from the rest of his body, when he was slain in battle, remain entire and uncorrupted[1] to this day, and are kept in a silver shrine, and are venerated by all with due honour, in St. Peter's church in the royal city,[2] which has taken its name from Bebba, one of its former queens. Through this king's management the provinces of the Deiri and the Bernicians, which till then had been at variance, were peacefully united and moulded into one people. He was nephew to king Aeduini by his sister Acha;[3] and it was fit that so great a predecessor should have in his own family so great a person to succeed him in his religion and sovereignty.[4]

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CHAP. VII. [A.D. 634—664.]—HOW THE PROVINCE OF THE WEST SAXONS RECEIVED THE WORD OF GOD BY THE PREACHING OF BIRINUS; AND OF HIS SUCCESSORS, AGILBERCT AND LEUTHERIUS.

§ 167. At that time,[5] [A.D. 634,] the people of the West Saxons, formerly called Gevissi, in the reign of Cynegils, embraced the faith of Christ, at the preaching of the Word by bishop Birinus, who came into Britain by the advice of pope Honorius;[6] having promised in his presence that he would sow the seed of the holy faith in the inner parts beyond the Angles, where no other teacher had been before him. Hereupon, by the command of the same pope, he received episcopal consecration from Asterius,[7] bishop of Genoa; but on his arrival in Britain, he first entered the nation of the Gevissi, and finding all there most confirmed pagans, he thought it better to preach the Word of God there, rather than to proceed further to seek for others to preach to.

§ 168. Now, as he preached in the aforesaid province, [A.D. 653,] it happened that the king himself, having been catechised, was washed in the baptismal font together with his people, and Osuald, the most holy and victorious king of the Northumbrians, being

[1] The various peregrinations of the relics of St. Oswald are detailed in the Acta SS. mens. Aug. ii. 86; and in Capgrave, foll. 255, 256.

[2] The Saxon paraphrase enables us to identify this royal city as Bamborough, on the coast of Northumberland.

[3] The Saxon version takes no notice of Acha; and the Life of Oswald, written by Drogo, (Act. S. Aug. ii. 98,) calls her Leba.

[4] In the Life of Oswald, by Drogo, already cited, is an insertion connecting this chapter with the following, and stating that the conversion of the West Saxons was procured by the agency of Oswald; which is by no means improbable when we consider the interest which his marriage into the royal family of that kingdom gave him in its pagan inhabitants.

[5] The date is uncertain, but as the Saxon Chronicle and Florence agree in fixing on A.D. 634, their calculation has been adopted.

[6] St. Birinus was sent into England about 634, by the direction of pope Honorius I. The date of his death is uncertain.

[7] Asterius was archbishop of Milan, but resided at Genoa, where he died in 640. See Ughelli, Italia Sacr. iv. col. 64. There is no record of any bishop of Genoa between 452 and 680.

present, received him as he came forth from the laver, and by an alliance[1] most pleasing and acceptable to God, first adopted him, thus dedicated to God by a second birth, for his son, and then took his daughter in marriage. The two kings[2] gave to the bishop the city called Dorcic,[3] there to settle his episcopal[4] see; where having built and consecrated churches, and by his pious labour called many to the Lord, he departed this life, and was buried in the same city; but many years after, when Haedde[5] was bishop, he was translated thence to the city of Winchester, and laid in the church of the blessed apostles, Peter and Paul.

§ 169. [A.D. 643.] The king also dying, his son Coinualch succeeded him in the kingdom, but refused to embrace the faith and the sacraments of the heavenly kingdom; and not long after also he lost the dominion of his earthly kingdom. For having divorced the sister[6] of Penda, king of the Mercians, whom he had married, and having taken another wife, thereupon a war ensuing, and being deprived of that realm, he withdrew to Anna, king of the East Angles, where living three years in banishment, he found and received the true faith; for the king, with whom he lived in his banishment, was a good man, and happy in a good and pious offspring, as we shall show[7] hereafter.

§ 170. But when Coinualch was restored to his kingdom, there came into that province, out of Ireland, a certain bishop called Agilberct,[8] by nation a Frenchman, but who had then lived a long time in Ireland, for the purpose of reading the Scriptures. He joined himself to the king, and voluntarily took on himself the office of preaching. The king, observing his erudition and industry, desired him there to accept an episcopal see, and stay there as the bishop of his nation. He complied with this request, and presided as bishop over that people many years. At length the king, who understood none but the language of the Saxons, growing weary of that bishop's foreign tongue, privily brought into the province another bishop of his own language, whose name was Uini, who had been ordained in France; and dividing his province into two dioceses, appointed for this last his episcopal see in the city of "Venta," by the Saxons called Uintancaestir. Agilberct, being highly offended that the king should do this without his advice, returned[9] into France, and having received the bishopric of the

[1] Oswald did not hold the opinion that the spiritual affinity thus contracted with Cynegils, by having stood as his sponsor in baptism, placed any obstacle in the way of his marriage with the daughter of that prince, as it would have done at a later period.

[2] It appears from § 165, that Oswald was the superior lord; Cynegils, the subregulus.

[3] Dorchester, in Oxfordshire; after many wanderings this see was ultimately fixed at Lincoln.

[4] It is remarked by Pagi, A.D. 635, § 3, and 664, § 7, that Birinus was consecrated bishop without being appointed to any particular see.

[5] See § 286.

[6] The name of this sister of Penda is unknown to us.

[7] See § 172.

[8] See Gallia Christiana, (vii. 26,) and Acta Sanctor. Oct. v. 492.

[9] The return of Agilberct into France is placed by the Saxon Chronicle in 660, which is apparently incorrect, as he was present at the synod of Whitby in 664. The truth seems to be, that Agilberct left his residence with Coinwalch in 660, and remained in Northumberland until 664, in which year, after the synod of Whitby, he returned into France. See Pagi, ad an. 664, § 7; Gall. Christ. vii. 27.

city of Paris, died there, aged and full of days. Not many years after his departure out of Britain, Uini was also expelled from his bishopric by the same king, and took refuge with Uulfheri, king of the Mercians, of whom he purchased for money the see of the city of London, and remained bishop thereof till his death. Thus the province of the West Saxons continued no small time without a bishop.

§ 171. During which time, the king of that nation, very frequently sustaining very great losses in his kingdom from his enemies, at length bethought himself, that as he had been before expelled from the throne for his infidelity, and had been restored to his kingdom when he received the faith of Christ, so also, his province, being destitute of a bishop, was justly deprived of the Divine protection. He, therefore, sent messengers into France to Agilberct, humbly entreating him to return to the bishopric of his nation. But he excused himself, and affirmed that he could not go, because he was bound to the bishopric of his own city and diocese; however, that he might not seem to refuse him the assistance which he so earnestly entreated, he sent in his stead thither the priest Leutherius,[1] his nephew, who, if he thought fit, might be ordained his bishop, saying that he thought him worthy of a bishopric. The king and the people received him honourably, and entreated Theodore, then archbishop of Canterbury, to consecrate him their bishop. He was accordingly consecrated in the same city, [A.D. 670,] and many years zealously governed the whole bishopric of the Gevissæ by synodical authority.

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CHAP. VIII. [A.D. 640.]—HOW EARCONBERCT, KING OF KENT, ORDERED THE IDOLS TO BE DESTROYED; AND OF HIS DAUGHTER EARCONGOTA, AND HIS KINSWOMAN AEDILBERGAE, VIRGINS CONSECRATED TO GOD.

§ 172. IN the year of our Lord's incarnation 640, Eadbald,[2] king of Kent, departed this life, and left his kingdom to his son Earconberct, which he having received, most nobly governed twenty-four years and some months. He was the first of the English kings who of his supreme authority commanded the idols, throughout his whole kingdom, to be forsaken and destroyed, and the fast of forty days to be observed; and that the same might not easily be neglected by any one, he appointed proper and condign punishments for the offenders. His daughter Earcongota, as became the offspring of such a parent, was a most virtuous virgin, serving God in a monastery in the region of the Franks, built by a most noble abbess, called Fara,[3] at a place called "In Brig;" for at that time

[1] This probably occurred in 670; Pagi, ad an. § 4.

[2] After the death or divorce of his first wife, Eadbald married Emma, daughter of a Frankish king, (Florence, ap. Petrie and Hardy, 635,) who probably was daughter of Theodbert, king of Austria, (Pagi, A.D. 640, § 10.) He died A.D. 640, on the 20th Jan. according to the Annales Juvavienses, or the 22d of that month according to Thorne, col. 1769. His son Earconberct succeeded, and died 14th July, 664.

[3] Or Burgundofara, as she is more generally called. Her life by Jonas, a monk of Bobbio, is printed by Mabill., Act. Sanct. ord. S. Benedict. ii. 420.

but few monasteries being as yet built in the country of the Angles, many were wont, for the sake of monastic conversation, to repair to the monasteries of the Franks or of Gaul; and they also sent their daughters[1] there to be instructed, and wedded to their heavenly Bridegroom, especially in the monasteries of Brige,[2] of Cale,[3] and Andilegum.[4] Among whom was also Saethryd, daughter of the wife of Anna, king of the East Angles, above mentioned; and Aedilberg, natural[5] daughter of the same king; both of whom, though strangers, were for their virtue made abbesses of the monastery of Brige. Sexburg,[6] that king's eldest daughter, wife to Earconberct, king of Kent, had a daughter called Earcongota,[7] of whom we are about to speak.

§ 173. Many wonderful works and miracles of this virgin, dedicated to God, are to this day related by the inhabitants of that place; but it shall suffice us to say something briefly of her passage out of this world to the heavenly kingdom. The day of her summons drawing near, she visited in succession the cells within the monastery of the infirm servants of Christ, and particularly those that were of a great age, or most noted for probity of life, and humbly recommending herself to the prayers of them all, she did not conceal from them that her death was at hand, as she knew by revelation, which, she said, she had received in this manner. She had seen a number of men, all in white, come into the monastery, and being asked by her what they wanted, and what they did there? they answered that they had been sent thither to carry away with them the gold medal that had been brought thither from Kent. Towards the conclusion of that same night, at the dawn of morning, leaving the darkness of this world, she departed to the light of heaven. Many of the brethren of that monastery[8] that were in other houses, declared they had then plainly heard concerts of angels singing, and the noise as it were of a great multitude entering the monastery. Whereupon, going out immediately to see what it might be, they saw an extraordinary great light sent down from heaven, which conducted that holy soul, set loose from the bonds of the flesh, to the eternal joys of the heavenly country.

[1] Here the Saxon version adds the remark, that "kings also and noblemen sent their daughters thither."

[2] Faremoustier-en-Brie, formerly a celebrated Benedictine nunnery. See Gall. Christ. viii. 1700.

[3] Chelles, about four miles from Paris, a nunnery founded by Queen Bathildis, wife of Clovis the Second. See Gall. Christ. vii. 558.

[4] Andeley, an extinct nunnery, near Rouen, founded by Clotilda, wife of Clovis the Great. Gall. Christ. xi. 31; Mabill. Annal. Bened. lib. v. § 20.

[5] By "natural daughter" we are not to understand that she was an illegitimate child; it is a term then used in opposition to one who had been adopted. See Hist. Ecclesiæ Meldensis, by Plessæus, i. 698. The Bollandists have collected the information which has reached us respecting her, Acta Sanct. Jul. ii. 481.

[6] Here again the reader is referred to the Acta Sanct. Jul. ii. 346. She died abbess of Ely, after A.D. 679.

[7] Earcongota died an inmate of Faremoustier, but not its abbess, as some have stated. The date of this event is uncertain. See Acta Sanct. Feb. iii. 387; Mabill. Annales Bened. lib. xiv. § 38.

[8] This was one of the double monasteries which were so common during the period. A list of some of them may be seen in Lingard's Anglo-Saxon Church, i. 214, ed. 1845.

They had other miracles that were wrought from heaven the same night in the same monastery; but as we must proceed to other matters, we leave them to be related by those to whom such things belong. The body of this venerable virgin and bride of Christ was buried in the church of the blessed protomartyr, Stephen.[1] It was thought fit, three days after, to take up the stone which covered the grave, and to raise it higher in the same place, which whilst they were doing, so great a fragrance of perfume boiled up from below, that it seemed to all the brethren and sisters there present, as if a store of the richest balsams had been opened.

§ 174. Her aunt also, Aedilberg above mentioned, preserved the glory so pleasing to God, of perpetual virginity, in great continence of body, but the extent of her power became more conspicuous after her death. Whilst she was abbess, she began to build in her monastery a church, in honour of all the apostles, wherein she desired that her body might be buried; but when that work was advanced nearly half way, she was prevented by death from finishing it, and buried in the very place of the church where she had desired. After her death, the brethren occupied themselves with other things in preference, and this structure was intermitted for seven years, at the expiration whereof they resolved, by reason of the greatness of the work, wholly to lay aside the building of the church, but to translate the abbess's bones from thence to some other church that was finished and consecrated; and, on opening her tomb, they found the body as free from decay as it had been from the corruption of carnal concupiscence, and having washed it again and put on it other clothes, they translated the same to the church of the blessed martyr, Stephen, whose nativity (or commemoration-day) is there celebrated with much magnificence on the day of the nones of July [7th July].

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CHAP. IX. [A.D. 642.]—HOW MIRACULOUS CURES HAVE BEEN FREQUENTLY DONE IN THE PLACE WHERE KING OSUALD WAS KILLED; AND HOW, FIRST, A TRAVELLER'S HORSE WAS RESTORED, AND AFTERWARDS A YOUNG GIRL CURED OF THE PALSY.

§ 175. OSUALD, the most christian king of the Northumbrians, reigned nine years, including that year which is to be held accursed for the brutal impiety of the king of the Britons, and the mad apostasy of the English kings; for, as was said above,[2] it is agreed by the unanimous consent of all, that the names and memory of the apostates should be entirely erased from the catalogue of the christian kings, and no date be ascribed to their reign. After which period, Osuald was killed in a great battle, by the same pagan nation and pagan king of the Mercians, who had slain his predecessor Aeduini, at a place called in the English tongue Maserfelth,[3]

[1] See Mabill. Annal. Bened. lib. xiii. § 6. [2] See § 151.

[3] This locality is a disputed point. A place called Winwick, in Lancashire, named Maserfield, has claims to be regarded as the spot where the battle was fought; but there are stronger arguments in favour of Oswestry, (*i.e.* Oswald's tree,) in Shropshire. It is called by the Welsh "Croix Osualde," (Oswald's cross,) and here is a church, mentioned by Leland, which is dedicated to that king. Camd. Brit. col. 658; Monast. Anglic. i. 38, ed. 1655.

in the thirty-eighth[1] year of his age, on the fifth day of the month of August.

§ 176. How great his faith was towards God, and how remarkable his devotion, has been made evident by miracles since his death; for, in the place where he was killed by the pagans, fighting for his country, infirm men and cattle are healed to this day. Whereupon many took up the very dust of the place where his body fell on the ground, and putting it into water, did much good with it to their friends who were sick. This custom came so much into use, that the earth being carried away by degrees, there remained a hole as deep as the height of a man. Nor is it to be wondered that the sick should be healed in the place where he died; for, whilst he lived, he never ceased to provide for the poor and infirm, and to bestow alms on them, and assist them. Many miracles are said to have been wrought in that place, or with the earth carried from thence; but we have thought it sufficient to mention two, which we heard from our ancestors.

§ 177. It happened, not long after his death, that a man was travelling on horseback near that place, when his horse on a sudden began to tire, to stand stock-still, hang down his head, and foam at the mouth, and, at length, as his pain increased, he fell to the ground; the rider dismounted, and throwing some straw under him, waited to see whether the beast would recover, or he should have to leave him dead. At length, after much rolling about in extreme anguish, the horse happened to come to the very place where the illustrious king died. Immediately the pain ceased, the beast gave over his mad struggles, and, as is usual with tired horses, turned gently from side to side, and then starting up, perfectly recovered, began to graze on the green herbage.

§ 178. This the man observing, being an ingenious person, he concluded there must be some wonderful sanctity in the place where the horse had been healed, and left a mark there, [that he might know the spot again.] After which he again mounted his horse, and repaired to the inn where he intended to stop. On his arrival he found there a girl, niece to the landlord, who had long languished under the palsy; and when the friends of the family, in his presence, lamented the girl's bitter calamity, he gave them an account of the place where his horse had been cured. In short, she was put into a cart and carried and laid down at the place. Being placed there, she slept awhile, and when she awaked found herself healed of her bodily infirmity. Upon which she called for water, washed her face, arranged her hair, and covered her head with a linen cloth, and returned home on foot, in good health, with those who had brought her.

[1] According to the Saxon version, he was in the 37th year of his age.

CHAP. X. [A.D. 642.]—OF THE POWER OF THE EARTH OF THAT PLACE AGAINST FIRE.

§ 179. ABOUT the same time, another person of the British nation, as is reported, happened to travel by the same place, where the aforesaid battle was fought; and observing one particular spot of ground greener and more beautiful than any other part of the field, he judiciously concluded with himself that there could be no other cause for that unusual greenness in that place, but that some person of more holiness than any other in the army had there been killed. He therefore took along with him some of the dust of that earth, tying it up in a linen cloth, supposing it would some time or other be of use for curing sick people, and proceeding on his journey, he came at evening to a certain village, and entered a house where the villagers were feasting at supper. Being received by the owners of the house, he sat down with them at the entertainment, hanging the cloth, in which he had brought the earth, on a post against the wall. They feasted long and drank hard, with a great fire in the middle of the room; it happened that the sparks flew up and caught the top of the house, which, being made of wattles and covered with thatch, was presently in a flame; when the guests saw this, they suddenly ran out in a fright, without being able to put a stop to the fire which was about to consume the house. The house was consequently burnt down; only that post on which the dust hung remained entire and untouched by the flames. On observing this wonder, they were all amazed, and inquiring into it diligently, understood that the dust had been taken from the place where the blood of king Osuald had been shed. These miracles being made known and reported far and wide, many began daily to frequent that place, and received health to themselves and their friends.

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CHAP. XI. [A.D. 642.]—OF THE HEAVENLY LIGHT THAT RESTED ALL THE NIGHT OVER HIS RELICS, AND HOW BY THEM PERSONS POSSESSED WITH DEVILS WERE CURED.

§ 180. AMONG the rest, I think we ought not to pass over, in silence, the heavenly power and miracle which were shown when his bones were found, and translated into the church where they are now preserved. This was done by the care of Osthryda, queen of the Mercians, the daughter of his brother Osuiu, who reigned after him, as shall be said hereafter.

§ 181. There is a noble monastery in the province of Lindissi, called Beardaneu, which that queen and her husband Aedilred much loved, venerated, and honoured. It was here that she was desirous to lay the venerable bones of her uncle. When the waggon in which those bones were carried arrived towards evening at the aforesaid monastery, they that were in it refused to admit them, because, though they knew him to be a holy man, yet as he was a native of another province, and had acquired dominion over them [as a foreign king], they retained their ancient aversion to him even after death. Thus it came to pass that the relics were left in the open air all that night, with only a large tent spread over the waggon in which they were; but the appearance of a heavenly miracle showed with how much reverence they ought to be received

by all the faithful; for during that whole night, a pillar of light, reaching from the waggon up to heaven, was seen by almost all the inhabitants of the province of Lindissi. Hereupon, in the morning, the brethren of that monastery, who had refused it the day before, themselves began earnestly to pray that those holy relics, so beloved by God, might be deposited among them. Accordingly, the bones, being washed, were put into a shrine which they had made for that purpose, and placed in the church, with due honour; and that there might be a perpetual memorial of the royal person of this holy man, they hung up over the monument his banner made of gold and purple; and poured out the water in which they had washed the bones, in a corner of the sacristy. From that time, the very earth which received that holy water had the effect of a salutary grace in expelling devils from the bodies of persons possessed.

§ 182. Lastly, when the aforesaid queen afterwards made some stay in the same monastery, there came to visit her a certain venerable abbess, who is still living, called Aedilhild, the sister of the holy men Aedilvini and Aldevini, the first of whom was bishop in the province of Lindissi, the other abbat of the monastery called Peartaneu; not far from which was her monastery. When this lady was come thither, in a conversation between her and the queen, the discourse, among other things, turning upon Osuald, she said that she also had that night seen a light reaching from the relics up to heaven. The queen thereupon added, that the very dust of the pavement on which the water that washed [the bones] had been spilt, had already healed many sick persons. She thereupon desired that some of the said healthful dust might be given her, which she tied up in a cloth, and putting it into a little casket, returned home. Some time after, when she was in her monastery, there came to it a guest, who was wont often in the night to be on a sudden grievously tormented with an unclean spirit; he being hospitably entertained, and having gone to bed after supper, was on a sudden seized by the devil, and began to cry out, to gnash his teeth, to foam at the mouth, and to distort his limbs by different movements. None being able to hold or bind him, the servant ran, and knocking at the door, acquainted the abbess. She, opening the monastery door, went out herself with one of the nuns to the place of the men,[1] and calling a priest, desired he would come with her to the sufferer. Being come thither, and seeing many more present, who had not been able, though they endeavoured it, to hold the tormented person and prevent his convulsive motions, the priest used exorcisms, and did all he could to assuage the madness of the unfortunate man, but, though he took much pains, neither could he prevail. When no hope appeared of easing the madman, the abbess suddenly bethought herself of the said dust, and immediately ordered her servant to go and fetch her the small casket in which it was. As soon as she came with what she had been sent for into the porch of the house, in the inner part whereof the possessed person was tormented, he became suddenly silent, and

[1] Here we have another illustration of the double monastery.

laid down his head, as if he had been falling asleep, stretching out all his limbs to rest. All present were silent and watchful, and stood attentive to see the end of the affair. After some time, the man that had been tormented sat up, and fetching a deep sigh said, "Now I am like a sound man, for I am restored to my mental senses." They earnestly inquired how that came to pass, and he answered, "As soon as that virgin drew near the porch of this house, with the casket she was carrying, all the evil spirits that vexed me departed, and having left me, were no more to be seen." Then the abbess gave him a little of that dust, and the priest having prayed, he had a very quiet night; nor did he, from that time forward, suffer the least nocturnal fear or disturbance from the old enemy.

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CHAP. XII. [A.D. 642.]—OF A BOY CURED OF A FEVER AT HIS TOMB.

§ 183. SOME time after, there was a certain little boy in the said monastery, who had been long troubled with a severe fever; he was one day anxiously expecting the hour at which his fit was to come on, when one of the brethren, coming in to him, said, "Shall I tell you, my child, how you may be cured of this distemper? Rise, go into the church, and get close to Osuald's tomb; stay there quiet, and do not leave the tomb; be careful that you do not come away, or stir from the place, till the time that your fit is to go off shall have elapsed; then I will go in and fetch you away." The boy did as he was advised, and the disease durst not affect him as he sat by the saint's tomb; but in its fear fled so absolutely, that it durst not touch him either on the second or third day, or ever after. The brother that came from thence, and told me this, added, that at the time when he was talking with me, the young man was then still living in that monastery, on whom, when a boy, that miraculous cure had been wrought. Nor is it to be wondered that the prayers of that king, who was then reigning with our Lord, should be very efficacious with him, since he, whilst formerly governing his temporal kingdom, was also wont to pray and take more pains for that which is eternal.

§ 184. In short, it is reported, that he often continued in prayer from the hour of mattin lauds till it was day; and that by reason of his constant custom of praying or giving thanks to the Lord, he was wont always, wherever he sat, to hold his hands turned up on his knees. It is also commonly reported, and became a trite proverb, that he ended his life in words of prayer; for when he was beset with weapons and enemies, and perceived that he must immediately be killed, he prayed for the souls of his army. Whence it is proverbially said, "Lord have mercy on their souls, said Osuald, as he fell to the ground." His bones,[1] therefore, were translated into the monastery which we have

[1] During the Danish invasion they were carried from Bardney to Gloucester. Sim. Dunelm. col. 152; Brompton, col. 833; Capgrave, fol. 256. His head was placed in the same coffin with the body of St. Cuthbert, and was found when the tomb of that saint was examined in 1827. See p. 187 of the work published by the Rev. J. Raine, entitled, "St. Cuthbert, with an Account of the state in which his Remains were found upon the opening of the Tomb in Durham Cathedral, in 1827." 4to. Durham, 1828.

mentioned, and buried therein: but the king that slew him commanded his head, hands, and arms to be cut off from the body, and hung upon stakes. But his successor in the throne, Osuiu, coming thither a year after, with his army, took them down, and buried his head in the church of Lindisfarne, and the hands and arms in the Royal City.[1]

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CHAP. XIII. [A.D. 642.]—OF A CERTAIN PERSON IN IRELAND WHO WAS RECOVERED, WHEN AT THE POINT OF DEATH, BY HIS RELICS.

§ 185. NOR was the fame of this renowned personage confined to Britain, but spreading the rays of his healing brightness even far beyond the sea, it reached also to Germany and Ireland. In short, the most reverend prelate, Acca,[2] is wont to relate, that when, in his journey to Rome, he and his bishop Uilfrid stayed some time with Uilbrord, the most holy archbishop of the Frisians, he had often heard him talk of the wonders which had been wrought in that province at the relics of that most reverend king. And that in Ireland, when, being yet only a priest, he led a pilgrim's life therein for love of the eternal country, the fame of that king's sanctity was already spread far and near in that island also. One of the miracles, among the rest, which he related, we have thought fit to insert in our history.

§ 186. "At the time," said he, "of the mortality[3] which made such great havoc in Britain and Ireland, among others, the infection reached a certain scholar of the Scottish race, a man indeed learned in worldly literature, but in no way solicitous or studious of his own eternal salvation; who, seeing his death near at hand, began to fear and tremble, lest as soon as he was dead he should be hurried away to hell for his sins. He sent for me, for I was in that neighbourhood, and whilst he was trembling and sighing, with a mournful voice he made his complaint to me, in this manner: 'You see that my distemper gradually increases, and that I am now reduced to the point of death. Nor do I question but that after the death of my body I shall be immediately snatched away to the perpetual death of my soul, and undergo the torments of hell; since for a long time, amidst all my reading of divine books, I have rather addicted myself to vice, than to keep the commandments of God. But it is my resolution, if the divine mercy shall grant me a new term of life, to correct my vicious habits, and totally to reform my mind and whole course of life in obedience to the divine will. But I am sensible, that I have no merits of my own to obtain a prolongation of life, nor can I confide in it, unless it shall please God to forgive me, miserable and unworthy as I am, through the assistance of those who have faithfully served Him. We have heard, and the report is universal, that there was in your nation a king, of wonderful sanctity, called Osuald, the

[1] Namely, Bamborough, in Northumberland. See § 166.
[2] This event happened in 678 or 679. See the Life of Wilfred, by Eddius.
[3] On this pestilence, which occurred in 665, see Ussher, Brit. Eccl. Antiq. pp. 490, 491.

excellency of whose faith and virtue is become renowned even after his death by the working of miracles. I beseech you, if you have any relics of his in your custody, that you will bring the same to me; in case the Lord shall be pleased, through his merits, to have mercy on me.' I answered, 'I have indeed some of the stake on which his head was set up by the pagans, when he was killed; and if you believe, with a sincere heart, the divine goodness may, through the merit of so great a man, both grant you a longer term of life here, and render you worthy of admittance into eternal life.' He answered immediately, that he had entire faith therein. Then I blessed some water, and put into it a chip of the aforesaid oak, and gave it the sick man to drink. He presently found ease, and recovering of his sickness, lived a long time after; and, being entirely converted to God in heart and actions, wherever he came, he spoke of the goodness of his merciful Creator, and the honour of his faithful servant."

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CHAP. XIV. [A.D. 642.]—ON THE DEATH OF PAULINUS, ITHAMAR WAS MADE BISHOP OF ROCHESTER IN HIS STEAD. OF THE WONDERFUL HUMILITY OF KING OSUIN, WHO WAS CRUELLY SLAIN BY OSUIU.

§ 187. OSUALD being translated to the heavenly kingdom, his brother Osuiu,[1] a young man of about thirty years of age, succeeded him on the throne of his earthly kingdom, and held it twenty-eight years with much trouble, being harassed by the pagan nation of the Mercians,[2] that had slain his brother, as also by his own son Alchfrid, and by his cousin-german Oidilvald, the son of his brother who had reigned before him. In his second year, that is, in the year of our Lord's incarnation 644, the most reverend father Paulinus, formerly bishop of York, but then of the city of Rochester, departed to our Lord, on the sixth day of the ides of October, [10th Oct.] having held the bishopric nineteen[3] years, two months, and twenty-one days; and was buried in the sacristy of the blessed apostle Andrew, which king Aedilberct had built from the foundation, in the same city of Rochester. In his place, archbishop Honorius ordained Ithamar,[4] a native of the Kentish nation, but not inferior to his predecessors in learning and conduct of life.

§ 188. [A.D. 651.] Osuiu, during the first part of his reign, had a partner in the royal dignity called Osuini,[5] of the race of king Aeduini, and son to Osric, of whom we have spoken above, a man of wonderful piety and religion, who governed the province of the

[1] Since Beda, when mentioning the death of bishop Paulinus, here joins 10 Oct. in the second year of Osuiu, with A.D. 644, it follows that he could not have come to the throne before 10 Oct. 642. See Pagi ad an. § 3.

[2] Penda, king of Mercia, was probably, at this time, in league with the Britons, between whom and Oswi, the Annals of Tigernach mention a battle as having been fought in 642.

[3] Wharton, Angl. Sacr. i. 329, proposes that here, instead of nineteen years we should read eleven; not observing that Beda speaks of the whole of the episcopate of Paulinus, and not of the period during which he filled the see of Rochester only.

[4] His episcopate extends from 644 to 664.

[5] He was canonized, and his history may be seen in the Acta SS. Aug. iv. 57.

Deiri seven years in very great prosperity, and was himself beloved by all men. But neither could he, who governed all the other northern part of the nation beyond the Humber, that is, the province of the Bernicians, live at peace with him; but on the contrary, the causes of their disagreement being heightened, he murdered him most cruelly. For when they had raised armies against one another, Osuini perceived that he could not maintain a war against one who had more auxiliaries than himself, and so thought it better at that time to lay aside all thoughts of warfare, and to preserve himself for better times. He therefore dismissed the army which he had assembled, and ordered all his men to return to their own homes, from the place that is called Uilfaraesdun,[1] that is, Uilfar's Hill, which is almost ten miles distant from the village called Cataract,[2] towards the south-west. He himself, with only one trusty soldier, whose name was Tondheri, withdrew and lay concealed in the house of earl Hunvald, whom he imagined to be his most assured friend. But, alas! it was far otherwise; for the same earl betrayed him, and Osuiu, in a detestable manner, by the hands of his prefect Aediluin, slew him and the soldier aforesaid. This happened on the 13th of the calends of September, [20th Aug.] in the ninth year of his reign, at a place called "Ingetlingum,"[3] where afterwards, to atone for his crime, a monastery was built, wherein prayers were to be daily offered up to the Lord for the redemption of the souls of both kings, that is, of him that was murdered, and of him that commanded him to be killed.

§ 189. King Osuini was of a graceful aspect, and tall of stature, affable in discourse, and courteous in behaviour; and most bountiful to all men, as well to the ignoble as the noble; so that he was beloved by every one for his royal qualities of body and mind, and his merits, and persons of even the first rank came from almost all provinces to serve him. Among other virtues and rare endowments and glorious blessings, if I may so express it, humility is said to have been the greatest, which it will suffice to prove by one example.

§ 190. He had given an excellent horse to Bishop Aidan, which he might either use in crossing rivers, or in performing a journey upon any urgent necessity, though he was wont to travel ordinarily on foot. Some short time after, a poor man meeting him, and asking alms, he immediately dismounted, and ordered the horse, with all his royal trappings, to be given to the beggar; for he was very compassionate, a great friend to the poor, and, as it were, the father of the wretched. This being told to the king, when they were going in to dinner, he said to the bishop, "Why would you, my lord bishop, give the poor man that royal horse, which was necessary for your own use? Had not we many other horses of less value, and of other sorts, which would have been good enough to give to the poor, and not to give that horse, which I had particularly

[1] Although Beda has taken pains to indicate this locality with precision, modern topographers are unable to identify its position.

[2] See § 133.

[3] Now Gilling, near Richmond, in Yorkshire. Dr. Whittaker asserts that the ruins of the castle in which the murder was committed were removed only a few years ago, a statement which is contradicted by Raine, in his St. Cuthbert, p. 8.

chosen as a gift for yourself?" To whom the bishop instantly answered, "What is it you say, O king? Is that foal of a mare more dear to you than that Son of God?" Upon this they went in to dinner, and the bishop sat in his place; but the king, who was come from hunting, stood warming himself, with his attendants, at the fire. Then, on a sudden, whilst he was warming himself, calling to mind what the bishop had said to him, he ungirt his sword, and gave it to a servant, and approaching in a hasty manner fell down at the bishop's feet, beseeching him to forgive him; "For from this time forward," said he, "I will never speak any more of this, nor will I judge of what, or how much of our money you shall give to the sons of God." The bishop was much agitated at this sight, and immediately starting up, raised him, saying, that he would be entirely reconciled to him, if he would but sit down to his meat, and lay aside all sorrow. The king, at the bishop's command and request, beginning to be merry, the bishop on the other hand grew so melancholy as even to shed tears. His priest then asking him, in the language of his country, which the king and his servants did not understand, why he wept, "I know," said he, "that the king will not live long; for I never before saw a humble king; whence I conclude that he will soon be snatched out of this life, because this nation is not worthy of such a ruler." Not long after, the bishop's dire prediction was fulfilled by the king's sad death, as has been said above. But bishop Aidan[1] himself was also taken out of this world, only twelve days after the king he loved, that is, on the day before the kalends of September, [31st Aug.] to receive from our Lord the eternal reward of his labours.

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CHAP. XV. [A.D. 642—651.]—HOW BISHOP AIDAN FORETOLD TO CERTAIN SEAMEN A STORM THAT WOULD HAPPEN, AND GAVE THEM SOME HOLY OIL TO ALLAY IT.

§ 191. How great were the merits of this man, was made manifest by the all-seeing Judge, with the testimony of miracles, whereof it will suffice to mention three as a memorial. A certain priest, whose name was Utta,[2] a man of great gravity and truthfulness, and on that account honoured by all men, even the princes of the world, being ordered to go to Kent, to bring from thence, as wife for king Osuiu, Eanfleda,[3] the daughter of king Aeduin, who had been carried thither when her father was killed; and intending to go thither by land, but to return with the virgin by sea, repaired to bishop Aidan, entreating him to offer up his prayers to our Lord for him and his company, who were then to set out on such a journey. He, blessing and recommending them to our Lord, at the same time gave them some consecrated oil, saying, "I know that when you go on ship-board, you will meet with a storm and contrary wind; but do you remember to cast this oil which I give you into the sea, and the wind shall cease immediately; you will have a pleasant calm sea, and will return home safely."

[1] See a sketch of his life in the Acta SS. mens. Aug. vi. 688.
[2] He was abbot of the monastery at Gateshead. See § 211.
[3] See §§ 114 and 148. The exact date of this marriage is uncertain.

§ 192. All which happened in order, as the bishop had predicted. For in the first place, the waves of the sea raging, the sailors endeavoured to ride it out at anchor, but all to no purpose; for the dashing sea breaking in on all sides, and the ship beginning to be filled with water, they all concluded that certain death was at hand; the priest at last, remembering the bishop's words, laid hold of the phial and cast some of the oil into the sea, which, as had been foretold, became presently calm from its fury. Thus it came to pass that the man of God, by the spirit of prophecy, both foretold the storm that was to happen, and by virtue of the same spirit, though absent in body, appeased the same after it had arisen. Which miracle was not told me by a person of little credit, but by Cynimund, a most faithful priest of our church, who declared that it was related to him by Utta himself, the priest on and by whom the same was wrought.

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CHAP. XVI. [A.D. 642—651.]—HOW THE SAME PERSON, BY HIS PRAYERS, SAVED THE ROYAL CITY WHEN FIRED BY THE ENEMY.

§ 193. ANOTHER[1] notable miracle of the same father is related by many such as were likely to have knowledge thereof; for during the time that he was bishop, the hostile army of the Mercians, under the command of Penda, impiously ravaged the country of the Northumbrians far and near, and came even to the Royal City,[2] which has its name from Bebba,[3] formerly its queen. Not being able to enter it by force, or by siege, he endeavoured to burn it; and having broken up the cottages which he found in the neighbourhood of the city, he brought to it an immense quantity of beams, planks, wattles from the walls and thatch from the roofs, wherewith he encompassed the city to a great height on the land side, and when he perceived that the wind set upon it, he fired the mass, designing to burn the town.

§ 194. At that time, the most reverend bishop Aidan resided in the isle of Farne, which is nearly two miles from the city; for thither he was wont very often to retire for the sake of private prayer and of silence. Indeed,[4] this solitary residence of his is to this day shown in that island. When he saw the flames of fire and the smoke carried by the boisterous wind above the city walls, he is reported, with weeping eyes and hands lifted up to heaven, to have said, "Behold, Lord, how great mischief Penda does!" Which words were hardly uttered, when the wind immediately turning from the city, drove back the flames upon those who had kindled them, so that some being hurt, and all frightened, they forebore any further attempts against the city, which they perceived was protected by the hand of God.

[1] We are unable to affirm the exact date of this miracle; possibly it occurred about 642.

[2] Namely, Bamborough.

[3] Bebba was first wife of Ethelfrith, king of Bernicia, who died in 617.

[4] One of the MSS. of the Saxon version here inserts a passage to the effect that from this time a succession of hermits had resided upon Farne Island. At a subsequent period it came into the possession of the monks of Durham, who established a cell in connexion with the present monastery. Beda mentions it again in his history of the Life of St Cuthbert.

CHAP. XVII. [A.D. 651.]—HOW THE POST OF THE CHURCH ON WHICH BISHOP AIDAN WAS LEANING WHEN HE DIED, COULD NOT BE BURNT WHEN THE REST OF THE CHURCH WAS CONSUMED BY FIRE; AND OF HIS INWARD LIFE.

§ 195. AIDAN was in the royal residence, not far from the city of which we have spoken above, at the time when death separated him from his body, after he had been bishop sixteen years;[1] for having a church and a chamber there, he was wont often to go and stay there, and to make excursions to preach in the country round about, which he likewise did at other of the king's vills, having nothing of his own besides his church and a few fields about it. When he was sick they set up a tent for him close to the wall at the west end of the church, so that the tent touched the church-wall, by which means it happened that he gave up the ghost, leaning against a post that was on the outside to strengthen the wall. He died in the seventeenth year of his episcopacy, on the day before the kalends of September, [31st Aug.] His body was immediately thence translated to the isle of Lindisfarne, and buried in the churchyard belonging to the brethren. Some time after, when a larger church was built there and dedicated in honour of the blessed prince of the apostles, his bones were translated thither, and deposited on the right hand of the altar, with the respect due to so great a prelate.

§ 196. Finan,[2] who had likewise been sent from the same monastery of Hii, the Scottish island, succeeded him, [A.D. 652,] and continued a considerable time in the bishopric. It happened some years after, that Penda, king of the Mercians, coming into these parts with a hostile army, destroyed all he could with fire and sword, and burned down the village and church above mentioned, where the bishop died; but it fell out in a wonderful manner that only this post, upon which he had leaned when he died, could not be consumed by the fire which consumed all about it. This miracle being taken notice of, the church was soon rebuilt in the same place, and that very post was set up on the outside, as it had been before, to strengthen the wall. It happened again, some while after, that the same village and church were burned[3] down the second time through carelessness, and even then the fire could not touch that post; and when in a most miraculous manner the fire consumed through the very holes in it wherewith it was fixed to the building, yet it was not permitted to hurt the said post. The church being therefore built there the third time, they did not, as before, place that post on the outside as a support, but within the church itself, as a memorial of the miracle; and the people coming in were wont to kneel there, and implore the divine mercy. And it is manifest that since that time many have been healed in that

[1] From this it appears that if Aidan was consecrated bishop before 31st Aug. that event must have happened in 634; but in 635, if he was ordained after that day. The chronology of his life is confused in consequence of the variation of the MSS. of Beda at this point, some reading seventeen years instead of sixteen. Concerning him see Acta SS. mens. Aug. vi. 688.

[2] The episcopate of Finan extends from 651 to 661.

[3] We have here an incidental, but a convincing proof, that at this time the Saxon churches were built with wood.

same place, as also that chips being cut off from that post, and put into water, have healed many persons and their friends from their distempers.

§ 197. I have written thus much concerning the person and works of the aforesaid individual, in no way commending or approving what he imperfectly understood in relation to the observance of Easter; nay, very much detesting the same, as I have most manifestly proved in the book I have written, "De Temporibus;"[1] but, like an impartial historian, simply relating what was done by or through him, and commending such things as are praiseworthy in his actions, and preserving the memory thereof for the benefit of the readers: namely, his love of peace and charity; his continence and humility; his mind superior to anger and avarice, and despising pride and vainglory; his industry in keeping and teaching the heavenly commandments; his diligence in reading and watching; his authority becoming a priest in reproving the haughty and powerful, and at the same time his tenderness in comforting the afflicted, and relieving and defending the poor. To say all in a few words, as near as I could be informed by those who knew him, he took care to omit none of all those things which he found enjoined in the apostolical or prophetical writings, but to the utmost of his power endeavoured to perform them all in his actions.

§ 198. These things I much love and admire in the aforesaid bishop; because I do not doubt that they were pleasing to God; but I do not praise or approve his not observing Easter at the proper time, either through ignorance of the canonical time appointed, or, if he knew it, being prevailed on by the authority of his nation not to follow the same. Yet this I do approve in him, that in the celebration of his Easter, the object which he had in view in all he held, venerated, or preached, was the same as ours, that is, the redemption of mankind, through the passion, resurrection and ascension into heaven of the Man Jesus Christ, who is the Mediator betwixt God and man. And therefore he always celebrated the same, not as some falsely imagine, on the fourteenth moon, like the Jews, whatsoever the day were, but on the Lord's day, from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon; and this he did from his belief of the resurrection of our Lord happening on the first day of the week, and for the hope of our resurrection, which also he, with the holy church, believed would of a truth happen on the same first day of the week, now called the Lord's day.

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### CHAP. XVIII. [A.D. 631.]—OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF THE RELIGIOUS KING SIGBERCT.

§ 199. AT this time,[2] the kingdom of the East Angles, after the death of Earpuald, the successor of Redwald, was subject to his brother Sigbert, a good and religious man, who long before had received the laver of baptism in France, whilst he lived in banish-

[1] This treatise occurs in the sixth volume of Giles's edition of Bede's works, p. 123.

[2] In consequence of this and similar vague expressions, the chronology of the kingdom of East Anglia is confused and uncertain. It appears, however, from

ment, flying from the enmity of Reduald; and returning home, as soon as he ascended the throne, being desirous to imitate the good institutions which he had seen in France, he set up a school for boys to be instructed in literature, and was assisted therein by bishop Felix, who came to him from Kent, and who furnished him with masters and teachers after the manner of the inhabitants of Kent.

§ 200. [A.D. 635.] This king became so great a lover of the heavenly kingdom, that at last, quitting the affairs of his kingdom, and committing the same to his kinsman Ecgric, who before held a part of that kingdom, he himself went into a monastery,[1] which he had built for himself, and having received the tonsure, applied himself rather to fight for a heavenly throne. Having done this for some considerable time, it happened that the nation of the Mercians, under king Penda, made war on the East Angles; who, finding themselves inferior in war to their enemies, entreated Sigberct to go with them to battle, to encourage the soldiers. He, being unwilling, refused; upon which they drew him against his will out of the monastery, and carried him to the battle, hoping that the soldiers would be less disposed to waver and fly in the presence of him, who had once been a notable and a brave commander. But he, still keeping in mind his profession, whilst in the midst of a noble army, would carry nothing in his hand but a wand, and was killed with King Ecgric; and the pagans pressing on, all their army was either slaughtered or dispersed.

§ 201. [A.D. 635.] Anna,[2] the son of Eni, of the royal blood, a good man, and father of an excellent[3] family of children, succeeded them in the kingdom. Of whom we shall speak hereafter; he being also slain [A.D. 654] by the same pagan commander of the Mercians as his predecessor had been.

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CHAP. XIX. [A.D. 633.]—HOW FURSEY BUILT A MONASTERY AMONG THE EAST ANGLES, AND OF HIS VISIONS AND SANCTITY, TO WHICH, HIS FLESH REMAINING UNCORRUPTED AFTER DEATH BORE TESTIMONY.

§ 202. WHILST Sigberct still governed the kingdom, there came out of Ireland a holy man called Fursey, renowned both for his words and actions, and remarkable for singular virtues, being desirous to live a pilgrim's life for our Lord, wherever an opportunity should offer. On coming into the province of the East Angles, he was honourably

§ 135, that three years after the conversion of Earpwald, Sigebert succeeded to the throne, A.D. 631. The length of his reign may be gathered from what we learn concerning that of his successor Anna, who, according to the Legend of Etheldritha, abbess of Ely, § 11, (Liber Eliensis, p. 23, ed. 1848,) was slain A.D. 654, in the nineteenth year of his reign, a synchronism which carries back his accession and the death of Sigebert to A.D. 635.

[1] The Liber Eliensis, p. 14, quoted above, tells us that this was the monastery of Betrichesworth, now St. Edmund's. It ascribes the death of Sigebert to 637. See Monast. Angl. i. 285.

[2] The reign of Anna extends from 635 to 654. He was of the royal race, as his brother Raedwald was the son of Tytila, and grandson of Wuffa, from whom the kings of East Anglia had the designation of Uffingas.

[3] Sexburga, abbess of Ely, Ethelburga, abbess of Brie, Etheldritha, abbess of Ely, Milburga, nun of Ely, Sæthrytha, abbess of Brie, and Wihtburga, nun of Ely, were daughters of Anna. Many of them were canonized.

received by the aforesaid king; and performing his usual employment of preaching the gospel, by the example of his virtue and the efficacy of his discourse he converted the unbelievers to Christ, and confirmed in the faith and love of Christ those that already believed.[1]

§ 203. Here he fell into some infirmity of body, and was thought worthy to see an angelic vision; in which he was admonished diligently to proceed in the ministry of the Word, which he had undertaken, and indefatigably to continue in his usual watching and prayers; inasmuch as his departure was certain, but the hour of it would be uncertain, according to the saying of our Lord, "Watch ye therefore, because ye know not the day nor the hour." [Matt. xxv. 13.] Being confirmed by this vision, he applied himself with all speed to build a monastery on the ground which had been given him by king Sigberct, and to establish regular discipline therein. This monastery was within a wood, and pleasantly situated in the vicinity of the sea; it was built within the castle, which in the English language is called "Cnobheresburg,"[2] that is, Cnobher's Town; afterwards, Anna, king of that province, and the nobility, embellished it with more stately buildings and donations. This man was of very noble Scottish blood, but much more noble in mind than in birth. Even from his boyish years, he had particularly applied himself to reading sacred books, and following monastic discipline, and, as is most becoming to holy men, he carefully practised all that he learned ought to be done.

§ 204. In short, in process of time he built himself the monastery, wherein he might with more freedom indulge his heavenly studies. There, falling sick, as the Book about his life fully informs us, he fell into a trance, and quitting his body from the evening till the cock crew, he was found worthy to behold the choirs of angels, and to hear their blessed praises. He was wont to declare, that among other things he distinctly heard this: "The saints shall advance from one virtue to another." [Ps. lxxxiv. 7.] And again, "The God of gods shall be seen in Sion." Being restored to his body at that time, and again taken from it three days after, he not only saw the greater joys of the blessed, but also extraordinary combats of evil spirits, who by frequent accusations wickedly endeavoured to obstruct his journey to heaven; but the angels protecting him, all their endeavours were in vain. Concerning which particulars, if any one desires to be more fully informed, that is, with what subtle fraud the devils unfolded both his actions and super-

[1] It may be convenient to throw into one note the outlines of the information which has reached us concerning Fursey, as far as it is necessary to illustrate Beda's narrative. From a comparison of what is here stated with a legend of great antiquity, supposed by Bollandus to be that from which Beda's extracts are made, (Acta SS. mens. Jan. ii. 36,) it would appear that he arrived in England about 633, that he passed over into France about 648, and that he died at Mazieres, in Poitou, 650. See Pagi, A.D. 644, §§ 3—5; the Acta SS. (as above;) Ussher's chronology varies from that here adopted. He thinks that Fursey arrived in England 637, that he built Cnobheresburg in 639, and that he left England for Gaul in 640.

[2] Now Burghcastle, in Suffolk, at the junction of the Yare and Waveney. See Camd. Brit. col. 451.

fluous words, yea and even his thoughts, as if they had been written down in a book; and of what pleasing or disagreeable things he was informed by the holy angels, or by just men who appeared to him among the angels; let him read the little Book[1] of his life which I have mentioned, and I believe he will thereby reap much spiritual profit.

§ 205. But there is one thing among the rest, which we have thought may be beneficial to many if it were inserted in this history. When he had been lifted up on high, he was ordered by the angels that conducted him to look back upon the world. Upon which, casting his eyes downward, he saw as it were a very obscure valley underneath him. He also saw four fires in the air, not far distant from each other. Then asking the angels, what fires those were? he was told that they were the fires which would kindle and consume the world. One of them was of falsehood, when we do not fulfil that which we promised in baptism, to renounce Satan and all his works. The next of covetousness, when we prefer the riches of the world to the love of heavenly things. The third of discord, when we make no difficulty to offend the minds of our neighbours even in needless things. The fourth of impiety, when we look upon it as no crime to rob and to defraud the weak. These fires, increasing by degrees, extended so as to meet one another, and being joined, became an immense flame. When it drew near, fearing for himself, he said to the angel, "My lord, behold the fire draws near me." The angel answered, "That which you did not kindle shall not burn within you; for though this appears to be a terrible and great fire, yet it tries every man according to the merits of his works; for every man's concupiscence shall burn in this fire; for as every one burns in the body through unlawful pleasure, so when discharged from the body, he shall burn in the punishment which he has deserved."

§ 206. Then he saw one of the three angels, who had been his conductors throughout both his visions, go before and divide the flame of fire, whilst the other two, flying about on both sides, defended him from the danger of the fires. He also saw devils flying through the fire, raising conflagrations of wars against the just. Then followed accusations of the wicked spirits against him, the defence of the good angels in his favour, and a more extended view of the heavenly troops; as also of holy men of his own nation, who, as he had long since been informed, had been deservedly advanced to the degree of priesthood, from whom he heard many things which might be very salutary to himself, or to all others that would listen to them. When they had ended their discourse, and returned to heaven with the angelic spirits, the three angels, of whom we have spoken before, remained with the blessed Fursey, being they who were to bring him back to his body. And when they approached the aforesaid immense fire, the angel divided the flame, as he had done before; but when the man of God came to the passage so opened

[1] Besides the Lives of Fursey above mentioned, another of considerable importance is preserved in the Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS. 505, fol. 174, which appears from internal evidence to have been written A.D. 655.

amidst the flames, the unclean spirits, laying hold of one of those whom they roasted in the fire, threw him at him, and touching his shoulder and jaw, burned them. He knew the man, and called to mind that he had received his garment when he died; and the angel, immediately laying hold of him, threw him back into the fire, and the malignant enemy said, "Do not reject him whom you before received; for as you accepted the goods of this sinner, so you ought to partake of his punishment." The angel replying, said, "He did not receive the same through avarice, but in order to save his soul." The fire ceased, and the angel turning to him, added, "That which you kindled burned in you; for had you not received the money of this person that died in his sins, neither would his punishment burn in you." And proceeding in his discourse, he gave him wholesome advice as to what ought to be done towards the salvation of such as repented unto death. Being afterwards restored to his body, throughout the whole course of his life he bore the mark of the fire which he had felt in his soul, visible to all men on his shoulder and jaw; and the flesh publicly showed, in a wonderful manner, what the soul had suffered in private. He always took care, as he had done before, to persuade all men to the practice of virtue, as well by his example, as by preaching. But as for the matter of his visions, he would only relate them to those who, from the desire of reformation, wished to learn the same. An ancient brother of our monastery is still living, who is wont to declare that a very truthful and religious man told him, that he had seen Fursey himself in the province of the East Angles, and heard those visions from his mouth; adding, that though it was in most sharp winter weather, and a hard frost, and the man was sitting in a thin garment when he related it, yet he sweated as if it had been in the greatest heat of summer, either through the multitude of excessive fear, or spiritual consolation.

§ 207. To return to what we were saying before; when, after preaching the word of God many years in Scotland,[1] he could no longer bear easily the crowds that resorted to him, leaving all that he seemed to possess, he departed from his native island, and came with a few brethren through the Britons into the province of the Angles, and preaching the word of God there, as has been said,[2] built a noble monastery. These things being rightly performed, he became desirous to rid himself of all business of this world, and even of the monastery itself, and forthwith left the care of the same, and of souls, to his brother Fullanus,[3] and the priests Gobbanus and Dicullus, and being himself free from all worldly matters, resolved to end his life as a hermit. He had another brother called Ultanus,[4] who, after a long monastical probation, had also adopted the life of a hermit. Repairing all alone to him, he lived

[1] By "Scotland," Beda here means Ireland.

[2] See § 203.

[3] After the death of Fursey he built the monastery of Fosse, in the diocese of Liege, and was assassinated 31st Oct. about A.D. 656. See Gall. Christ. iii. 932; Ussher, Antiq. p. 501; Mabill. Annal. Bened. lib. xiv. § 16.

[4] Ultan was abbot of the monastery of Peronne, and died 1st May, 686. Gall. Christ. iii 933; ix. 1036.

a whole year with him in continence and prayer, and laboured daily with his hands.

§ 208. Afterwards, seeing the province in confusion by the irruptions of the pagans, and presaging that the monasteries would be also in danger, he left all things in order, and sailed over into France, and being there honourably entertained by Hloduius,[1] king of the Franks, or by the patrician Ercunuald, he built a monastery in the place called Latiniacum,[2] and falling sick not long after, departed this life. The same nobleman, Ercunuald,[3] took his body, and deposited it in the porch of a church he was building in his town called Perrone,[4] till the church itself should be dedicated. This happened twenty-seven days after, and the body being taken from the porch, to be re-buried near the altar, was found as entire as if he had just then died. And again, four years after, a more decent residence[5] being built for the reception of the same body to the eastward of the altar, it was still found free from the stain of corruption, and translated thither with due honour; where it is well known that his merits, through the divine operation, have been declared by many miracles. These things concerning the incorruption of his body we have briefly taken notice of, that the sublimeness of this man may be the better known to the readers. All which, whosoever will read it, will find more fully described, as also about his fellow-labourers, in the Book of his life before mentioned.

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CHAP. XX. [A.D. 646—664.]—HONORIUS DYING, DEUSDEDIT IS CHOSEN ARCHBISHOP; AND OF THOSE WHO WERE AT THAT TIME BISHOPS OF THE EAST ANGLES, AND OF THE CHURCH OF ROCHESTER.

§ 209. IN the meantime, Felix,[6] bishop of the East Angles, dying, when he had held that bishopric seventeen years, Honorius ordained Thomas[7] his deacon, of the province of the Gyrvii,[8] in his place; and he departing this life when he had been bishop five years, Berctgils, surnamed Boniface, of the province of Kent, was appointed in his stead. Honorius himself, also, having run his course, departed this life in the year of our Lord's incarnation, 653,

[1] Clovis the Second succeeded his father Dagobert A D. 638, and died in 656.

[2] Lagny, near Paris, on the river Marne. See Gall. Christ. vii. 490; Mabill. Annal. lib. xiii. § 26.

[3] Upon the death of Ega, prefect or mayor of the palace, Erchinwald succeeded to that dignity in 640. Aimo Floriac. iv. 37, ap. Bouquet, Rer. Gall. Script. iii. 136. Mabill. Annal. Bened. lib. xiii. § 26.

[4] The circumstances here mentioned concerning Peronne are discussed in Gall. Christ. ix. 1035, and Mabill. Ann. xiv. § 1, 2. On the various translations of the body of Fursey, see Acta SS. Jan. ii. 35, 36; Pagi, A.D. 644, § 5.

[5] "Domuncula" is the Latin.

[6] See § 135. The Acta SS. Mart. i. 779, Godwin, Wharton, Smith, Petrie and others assign the date of his death to 647, presuming that the seventeen years of his episcopate were completed. But the following authority places it one year earlier. "S. Felix . . episcopus Orientalium Anglorum . . migravit ad Dominum, A.D. 646, indictione 4, cyclo decennovali per 1 incipiente," Contin. Ingulfi, ap. Gale, i. 109.

[7] It is probable that this Thomas died 652.

[8] The Girvii occupied the counties of Cambridge, Huntingdon, Northampton, and Lincoln. See Camd. Brit. col. 489.

on the day before the kalends of October [30th Sept.]; and when the see had been vacant a year and six months, Deusdedit,[1] of the nation of the West Saxons, was chosen the sixth archbishop of the see of Canterbury. To ordain whom, Ithamar,[2] bishop of the church of Rochester, came thither. His ordination was on the seventh of the kalends of April [26th March], and he ruled the church nine years, seven months, and two days; when he also died. Ithamar consecrated in his place Damian,[3] who was of the race of the South Saxons.

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CHAP. XXI. [A.D. 653.]—HOW THE PROVINCE OF THE MIDLAND ANGLES BECAME CHRISTIAN UNDER KING PEADA.

§ 210. AT this time the Middle Angles, under their prince Peada, the son of king Penda, received the faith and sacraments of the truth. Being an excellent youth, and most worthy of the title and person of a king, he was by his father elevated to the throne of that nation, and came to Osuiu, king of the Northumbrians, requesting to have his daughter Alchfleda given him to wife; but he could not obtain his desires unless he would embrace the faith of Christ, and be baptized, with the nation which he governed. When he heard the preaching of the truth, the promise of the heavenly kingdom, and the hope of the resurrection and future immortality, he declared that he would willingly become a Christian, even though he should be refused the virgin; being chiefly prevailed on to receive the faith by the son of king Osuiu, Alchfrid by name, who was his relation and friend, and had married his sister Cyniburga, the daughter of king Penda.

§ 211. Accordingly he was baptized by bishop Finan, with all his earls and soldiers, and their servants, that had come along with him, at a noted village belonging to the king, called "At the Wall."[4] And having received four priests, who for their erudition and good life were deemed proper to instruct and baptize his nation, he returned home with much joy. These priests were Cedd and Adda, and Betti and Diuma; the last of whom was by nation a Scot, the others were of the Angles. Adda was brother to Utta, whom we have mentioned[5] before, a renowned priest, and abbat of the monastery which is called "Ad Capreæ Caput."[6] The aforesaid priests, arriving in the province with the prince, preached the Word, and were willingly listened to; and many, as well of the nobility as of the diseased, renouncing the abominations of idolatry, were daily washed in the fountain of faith.

Nor did king Penda obstruct the preaching of the Word among his own people, that is, the nation of the Mercians, if any were willing to hear it; but, on the contrary, he hated and despised

[1] Before his consecration his name was Frithona, according to the life by Gotscelin of Canterbury, in MS. Cott. Vesp. B. xx. 13. See also Chron. Cant. in Trinity Hall, Camb. fol 25, b.

[2] See Acta SS. Jun. ii 294.

[3] He appears to have died a little before archbishop Deusdedit.

[4] Probably at Walbottle, near Newcastle.

[5] See § 191.

[6] At Gateshead, on the southern bank of the Tyne, near Newcastle.

those whom he perceived not to perform the works of faith, when they had once received the faith of Christ, saying, that they were contemptible and wretched who neglected to obey their God, in whom they believed. This was begun two years before the death of king Penda.

§ 212. But when he was slain, and Osuiu, the most christian king, succeeded him in the kingdom, as we shall state hereafter,[1] Diuma, one of the aforesaid four priests, was made bishop of the Midland Angles, as also of the Mercians, being ordained by bishop Finan; for the scarcity of priests was the necessary occasion that one prelate was set over two peoples. Having in a short time gained many of the common people to our Lord, he died among the Midland Angles, in the region called "In Feppingum;"[2] and Ceollach,[3] of the Scottish nation, succeeded him in the bishopric. This prelate, not long after, left his bishopric, and returned to the island of Hii, which, among the Scots, was the chief and head of many monasteries. His successor in the bishopric was Trumheri, a religious man, and educated in the monastic life. He was of the English nation, but ordained bishop by the Scots, which happened in the days of king Vulfheri, of whom we shall speak hereafter.[4]

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CHAP. XXII. [A.D. 653.]—HOW THE EAST SAXONS AGAIN RECEIVED THE FAITH WHICH THEY HAD BEFORE CAST OFF UNDER KING SIGBERCT, THROUGH THE PREACHING OF CEDD.

§ 213. AT that time, also, the East Saxons, at the instance of king Osuiu, again received the faith, which they had formerly cast off when they expelled[5] Mellitus, their bishop. For Sigberct, who reigned next to Sigberct surnamed The Little,[6] was then king of that nation, and a friend to the same king Osuiu, who, when he often came to him into the province of the Northumbrians, used to endeavour to persuade him to understand this; that those could not be gods that had been made by the hands of men; that a stock or a stone could not be proper matter whence to form a god, the chips whereof were either burned in the fire, or framed into any kind of vessels for the use of men, or else were cast out as refuse, trampled on and bruised into dust;—that God is rather to be understood as of incomprehensible majesty, and invisible to human eyes, almighty, eternal, the Creator of heaven and earth, and of mankind; who governs and will judge the world in righteousness; whose everlasting seat is to be believed to be in heaven, and not in vile and fading metal; and that it ought in reason to be concluded, that all those who have learned and obeyed the will of Him by whom they were created, will receive from Him eternal rewards. King Osuiu

[1] See § 221.
[2] This locality is uncertain. Reppington, or Repton, in Derbyshire, is by some supposed to be the place, but upon no satisfactory authority. He died, according to Wharton, (Angl. Sacr. i. 424,) in A.D. 658.
[3] According to the same authority, Ceollach returned to Iona in 659.
[4] Namely, at § 224.
[5] See § 163.
[6] This epithet is omitted in the Saxon version.

having often, in a friendly and brotherly manner, said this to king Sigbert, and much more to the like effect, at length, with the consent of his friends, he believed, and after consulting with those about him, and exhorting them, they all agreed and gave their approbation to the faith. He was baptized with them by bishop Finan, in the king's vill above[1] spoken of, which is called "At the Wall," because it is close by the wall with which the Romans formerly girt the island of Britain, at the distance of twelve miles from the eastern sea.

§ 214. King Sigbert, being now become a citizen of the eternal kingdom, returned to the seat of his temporal kingdom, requesting of Osuiu that he would give him some teachers, who might convert his nation to the faith of Christ, and wash them in the saving fountain. He, accordingly, sending into the province of the Midland Angles, invited to him the man of God, Cedd,[2] and, giving him another priest for his companion, sent them to preach the Word to the nation of the East Saxons. When these two, travelling to all parts of that country, had gathered a numerous church to our Lord, it happened that upon one occasion Cedd returned home, and came to the church of Lindisfarne to confer with bishop Finan; who, finding how successful he had been in the work of the gospel, made him bishop of the nation of the East Saxons, calling to him two other bishops to assist at the ministry of the ordination. Cedd, having received the episcopal dignity, returned to his province, and pursuing the work he had begun with more ample authority, built churches in several places, ordaining priests and deacons to assist him in the word of faith, and the ministry of baptizing, especially in the city which, in the language of the Saxons, is called "Ythancaestir,"[3] as also in that which is named Tilaburg;[4] the first of which places is on the bank of the Pente, the other on the bank of the Thames. Here, collecting an assemblage of the servants of Christ, he taught them to observe the discipline of regular life, as far as those rude people were then capable.

§ 215. Whilst the doctrine of everlasting life was thus, for a considerable time, making daily progress, to the joy of the king and of all the people, it happened that the king, at the instigation of the enemy of all good men, was murdered by his own kindred. They were two brothers who did this wicked deed; and being asked what had moved them to it, they had nothing else to answer, but that they had been incensed against the king, and hated him, because he was too apt to spare his enemies, and with a gentle spirit to forgive the wrongs they had done him, upon their entreaty. Such was the crime for which the king was killed, because he observed the precepts of the gospel with a devout heart; in which innocent death,

[1] See § 211.

[2] See the events of his life traced by Bollandus, Acta SS. mens. Januar. i. 373; and Wharton, Angl. Sacr. i. 425.

[3] According to Camden, Brit. col. 411, it was situated near Maldon, in Essex, for which he quotes the authority of Ralph Niger, a monk of Coggeshall.

[4] Tilbury, upon the Thames, on the Essex coast, Camd. Brit. col. 407. We must not suppose that sees were established at each of these places, but that Cedd occasionally resided there while occupied in preaching the gospel to the East Saxons.

however, his real offence was also punished, according to the prediction of the man of God. For one of those earls that murdered him was unlawfully married, which the bishop not being able to prevent or correct, he excommunicated him, and commanded all that would give ear to him not to enter within his house, nor to eat of his meat. The king despised this inhibition, and being invited by the earl, went to an entertainment at his house, and when he was going thence, the bishop met him. The king, beholding him, immediately dismounted from his horse, trembling, and fell down at his feet, begging pardon for his offence; for the bishop, who was likewise on horseback, had also alighted. Being much incensed, he touched the king, lying in that humble posture, with the rod which he held in his hand, and using his pontifical authority, spoke thus: "I say to you, forasmuch as you would not refrain from the house of that wicked and condemned person, you shall die in that very house." Yet it is to be believed, that such a death of a religious man not only blotted out this his offence, but also added to his merit; because it happened on account of his pious observance of the commands of Christ.

§ 216. Sigberct was succeeded in the kingdom by Suidhelm, the son of Sexbald, who was baptized by the same Cedd, in the province of the East Angles, at the king's country-seat, called "Rendlaesham,"[1] that is, Rendil's Mansion; and Aedilvald, king of the same nation of the East Angles, brother to Anna, king of the same people, received him as he came up from the holy font.

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CHAP. XXIII. [A.D. 660.]—BISHOP CEDD, HAVING A PLACE GIVEN HIM BY KING OIDILVALD FOR BUILDING A MONASTERY, CONSECRATES THE SAME TO OUR LORD WITH PRAYER AND FASTING. OF HIS DEATH.

§ 217. THE same man of God, whilst he was bishop among the East Saxons, was also wont several times to visit his own country, that is, the province of the Northumbrians, to make exhortations. Oidilvald,[2] the son of king Osuald, who reigned in the parts of the Deiri, finding him a holy and wise man, and of a good disposition, desired him to accept some land to build a monastery, to which the king himself might frequently resort, to offer his prayers to the Lord, and hear the Word, and be buried in it when he died; for he faithfully believed that he himself should receive much benefit by the daily prayers of those who were to serve the Lord in that place. The same king had had with him a brother of the same bishop, called Caelin, a man no less devoted to God, who, being a priest, was wont to administer to him and to his family the word and the sacraments of the faith; by whose means he chiefly came to know and love the bishop. That prelate, therefore, complying with the king's desires, chose himself a place to build a monastery among lofty and distant mountains, which looked more like lurking-places

[1] Rendlesham, situated on the river Debin, in Suffolk. See Camd. Brit. col. 446.
[2] See § 187. From Beda's guarded expression, we may probably infer, that this individual was king of only a portion of Deira.

for robbers and retreats for wild beasts, than habitations for men; to the end that, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, "In the habitations where before dragons dwelt, might spring up grass with reeds and rushes," [Isa. xxxv. 7;] that is, that the fruits of good works should there spring up, where before beasts were wont to dwell, or men to live after the manner of beasts.

§ 218. The man of God, desiring first to cleanse the place which he had received for the monastery from the pollution of former crimes, by prayer and fasting, that it might become acceptable to our Lord, and so to lay the foundations of the monastery, requested of the king that he would give him leave to reside there all the approaching time of Lent, to pray. During which days, except on the Sunday, he fasted[1] till the evening, according to custom, and then took no other sustenance than a very little bread, one hen's egg, and a little milk mixed with water. This, he said, was the custom of those from whom he had learned the rule of regular discipline; first, to consecrate to our Lord, by prayers and fastings, the places which they had newly received for building a monastery or a church. When there were ten days of Lent still remaining, there came one to call him to the king; and he, that the religious work might not be intermitted on account of the king's affairs, entreated his priest, Cynibill, who was also his own brother, to complete that which had been so piously begun. Cynibill readily complied, and when the time of fasting and prayer was over, he there built the monastery, which is now called Laestingaeu,[2] and established therein religious customs according to the rites of Lindisfarne, where they had been educated.

§ 219. Cedd for many years having administered the bishopric in the aforesaid province, and of this monastery, over which he had placed provosts, it happened that he came to that monastery at a time when there was a mortality, and fell sick and died.[3] He was first buried in the open air; but in the process of time a church was built of stone in the same monastery, in honour of the blessed Mother of God, and his body interred in the same, on the right hand of the altar.

§ 220. The bishop gave the monastery to be governed after him to his brother Ceadda, who was afterwards made bishop, as shall be said hereafter in its place.[4] For the four brothers we have mentioned, Cedd and Cynibill, Caelin and Ceadda, (which is a rare thing to be met with,) were all celebrated priests of our Lord, and two of them also attained the rank of the chief priesthood. When the brethren who were in his monastery, in the province of the East Saxons, heard that the bishop was dead and buried in the province of the Northumbrians, about thirty men came thither from that monastery, being desirous either to live near the body of their father, if it should so please God, or to die there and be buried.

[1] On this subject see Ussher on the Religion of the Ancient Irish, p. 575, ed. 8vo. Camb. 1835.

[2] Lastingham, near Whitby, in Yorkshire.

[3] This pestilence visited England and Ireland with great severity in A.D. 664. See Ussher, Brit. Eccl. Antiq. p. 491; also § 240

[4] See §§ 213, 241.

Being lovingly received by their bretnren and fellow-soldiers in Christ, all of them died there by the aforesaid pestilence, except one little boy, who was delivered from death by his father's prayers. For when he had lived there a long time after, and applied himself to the reading of the Scriptures, he was at last informed that he had not been regenerated by the water of baptism, and being immediately washed in the font of the laver of salvation, he was afterwards promoted to the order of priesthood, and proved very useful to many in the church. I do not doubt that he was delivered when at the point of death, as I have said, by the intercession of his father, (for his affection brought him to the body,) that so he might himself avoid eternal death, and exhibit the ministry of life and salvation to others of the brethren by his teaching.

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CHAP. XXIV. [A.D. 655.]—HOW KING PENDA BEING SLAIN, THE PROVINCE OF THE MERCIANS RECEIVED THE FAITH OF CHRIST, AND OSUIU GAVE POSSESSIONS AND TERRITORIES TO GOD, FOR BUILDING MONASTERIES, IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT FOR THE VICTORY WHICH HE HAD OBTAINED.

§ 221. AT this time, king Osuiu was exposed to the fierce and intolerable irruptions of the king of the Mercians, whom we have so often mentioned, and who had slain his brother; at length, necessity compelling him, he promised to give him more and greater royal ornaments and gifts than can be imagined, to purchase peace; provided that the king would return home, and cease to ravage and destroy the provinces of his kingdom. That perfidious king utterly refused to grant his request, and resolved to destroy and extirpate all his nation, from the highest to the lowest; whereupon he had recourse to the protection of the divine goodness for deliverance from his barbarous and impious foe, and binding himself by a vow, said, "If the pagan will not accept our gifts, let us offer them to Him that will, the Lord our God." He then vowed, that if he should be victorious, he would dedicate his daughter to our Lord in holy virginity, and give the possession of twelve farms to build monasteries. After this he gave battle with a very small army: indeed, it is reported that the pagans had three times the number of men; for in the war they had thirty legions, led on by most noble commanders. King Osuiu and his son Alchfrid met them with a very small army, as has been said, but confiding in the guidance of Christ; his other son, Ecgfrid, was then kept as an hostage at the court of queen Cynuise,[1] in the province of the Mercians. King Osuald's son Oidilvald, who ought to have assisted them, was on the enemy's side, and led them on to fight against his country and uncle; though, during the battle, he withdrew from the strife, and waited the event in a place of safety. The engagement beginning, the pagans were defeated and slain, the thirty royal commanders, and those who had come to his assistance, were almost

[1] She is called Kyneswitha by Thomas of Ely, Lib. Ehensis, p. 24, and was the wife of Penda.

all of them slain; among whom was Aedilheri,[1] brother and successor to Anna, king of the East Angles, who had been the occasion of the war, and who was now killed, with all his soldiers and auxiliaries. The battle was fought near the river Uinuaed,[2] which then, with the great rains, had not only filled its channel, but also overflowed all its banks, so that many more were drowned in the flight than were destroyed by the sword.

§ 222. Then king Osuiu, pursuant to the vow he had made to our Lord, returned thanks to God for the victory which he had obtained, and gave his daughter Aelfleda,[3] who was scarce a year old, to be consecrated to Him in perpetual virginity; giving also twelve small portions of land, wherein the desire of earthly warfare should cease, and in which there should be a perpetual residence and subsistence for the continued devotion of monks to follow the warfare which is spiritual, and pray diligently for the eternal peace of his nation. Of those possessions six were in the province of the Deiri, and the other six in that of the Bernicians. Each of the said possessions contained ten families, that is, a hundred and twenty in all. The aforesaid daughter of king Osuiu, thus to be dedicated to God, entered into the monastery, called Heruteu,[4] that is, "The Island of the Hart," where, at that time, the abbess Hild[5] presided, and, two years after, having acquired a possession of ten families, at the place called Streanaeshalch,[6] she built a monastery there, in which the aforesaid king's daughter was first a learner, and afterwards a teacher of the regular life; till, having completed the number of fifty-nine years, the blessed virgin departed to the nuptials and embraces of her heavenly Bridegroom. In that same monastery, she and her father, Osuiu,[7] her mother, Aeanfled,[8] her mother's father, Aeduini,[9] and many other noble persons, are buried in the church of the holy apostle Peter. King Osuiu concluded the aforesaid war in the region of Loidis, in the thirteenth year of his reign, on the 17th of the kalends of December [15th Nov.], to the great benefit of both nations; for he both delivered his own people from the hostile depredations of the pagans, and, having cut off their wicked head, converted the nation of the Mercians and the adjacent provinces to the grace of the christian faith.

[1] Ethelhere, the younger brother of Anna, succeeded him in 654, and, as is here stated, was killed the year following.

[2] Now Winmore, four miles from Leeds on the way to York. Bishop Gibson has a long note upon the name of the river Winwed, in his additions to Camd. Brit. col. 861.

[3] See a sketch of her life in the Acta SS. Feb. ii. 178, where it is stated that she was born A.D. 654, and died in 713.

[4] Now Hartlepool, in the county of Durham.

[5] Hild was of the royal family of Deira, being descended from Ella. She was born in 614, renounced the world in 647, became abbess of Hartlepool in 649, and died abbess of Whitby 15 Dec. 680. It is worthy of notice that the young princess was entrusted to the care of Hilda rather than to that of her aunt Ebba, abbess of Coldingham.

[6] Now Whitby, in Yorkshire. Camd. Brit. col. 906.

[7] Osuiu died 15 Feb. 670, in the 58th year of his age.

[8] She was the daughter of Eadwin, king of Deira; and upon the death of her daughter Aelfleda became co-abbess of Whitby. She was canonized, and her name occurs in the Calendar on December 5.

[9] He was slain 12th Oct. 633. See § 146.

§ 223. Diuma was made the first bishop[1] of the Mercians, as also of the Lindisfari and the Midland Angles, as has been said above,[2] and he died and was buried among the Midland Angles. The second was Cellach, who, quitting the episcopal office whilst still alive, returned into Scotland. Both these were of the nation of the Scots. The third was Trumheri, of the nation of the Angles, but taught and ordained by the Scots, who was abbat in the monastery that is called "Ingetilingum." This is the place where king Osuini was killed, as has been said above;[3] for queen Aeanfled, his kinswoman,[4] in satisfaction for his unjust death, begged of king Osuiu that he would give the aforesaid servant of God, Trumheri, a place there to build a monastery, because he also was kinsman[5] to the slaughtered king; in which monastery continual prayers should be offered up for the eternal health of the kings, both of him that had been slain, and of him who had caused him to be slain. The same king Osuiu governed the Mercians, as also the people of the other southern provinces, three years after he had slain king Penda; and he likewise subdued the greater part of the Picts to the dominion of the Angles.

§ 224. At which time he gave to the above-mentioned Peada, son to king Penda, because he was his kinsman,[6] the kingdom of the Southern Mercians, consisting, as is reported, of 5,000 families, divided by the river Trent from the Northern Mercians, whose land contained 7,000 families; but that same Peada was the next spring very wickedly killed, by the treachery, as is said, of his wife, during the very time of the Paschal feast. Three[7] full years after the death of king Penda, Immin, and Eafha, and Eadberct, generals of the race of the Mercians, rebelled against king Osuiu, setting up for their king Uulfhere,[8] son to the said Penda, a youth, whom they had kept concealed; and expelling the officers of the foreign king, they at once boldly recovered their liberty and their lands; and being thus free, together with their king, they rejoiced to serve Christ the true King, that they might obtain the everlasting kingdom which is in heaven. This king governed the race of the Mercians seventeen years, and had for his first bishop Trumheri, above spoken of;[9] the second, Jaruman; the third, Ceadda; the fourth, Uynfrid. All these, succeeding each other regularly under king Uulfhere, discharged the episcopal duties of the Mercian nation.

[1] The date of this succession of the Mercian bishops is obscure. According to Wharton, Angl. Sacr. i. 423, Diuma occupied the see from 655 to 658; Cellach, from 658 to 660; Trumheri from 660 to 663.

[2] See § 212. [3] See § 188.

[4] Eanfled was the great granddaughter of Yffi, founder of the kingdom of Deira, whose second son Aelfric, was Oswin's grandfather.

[5] The relationship of Trumheri to Oswin is uncertain.

[6] Penda had married Alchfleda, daughter of Oswin. See § 210.

[7] That is, in A.D. 658.

[8] A charter printed in the Cod. Diplomat. Sax. No. xiii. joins the month of October 672 with the fourteenth regnal year of Wulfheri; but it is marked by the editor as spurious.

[9] See § 212.

CHAP. XXV. [A.D. 652—664.]—HOW THE CONTROVERSY AROSE ABOUT THE TIME OF KEEPING EASTER, AGAINST THOSE WHO HAD COME OUT OF SCOTLAND.

§ 225. IN the meantime, bishop Aidan being dead, Finan,[1] who was ordained and sent by the Scots, succeeded him in the bishopric, and built a church in the isle of Lindisfarne, appropriate to the episcopal see; nevertheless, after the manner[2] of the Scots, he made it, not of stone, but entirely of hewn oak, and covered it with reeds; and the same was afterwards dedicated in honour of the blessed Peter the apostle, by the most reverend archbishop Theodore. Eadberct,[3] also bishop of that place, took off the thatch, and covered it entirely, both roof and walls themselves, with sheets of lead.

§ 226. At this time, a great and frequent controversy happened about the observance of Easter;[4] those that came from Kent or France affirming, that the Scots kept Easter Sunday contrary to the custom of the universal church. Among them was a most zealous defender of the true Easter, whose name was Ronan,[5] a Scot indeed by nation, but instructed in ecclesiastical truth, either in the parts of France or Italy, who, by disputing with Finan, corrected many, or at least induced them to make a more strict inquiry after the truth; yet he could not amend Finan, but, on the contrary, made him the more inveterate by reproof, and an open opposer of the truth, he being of a hot and violent temper. James, formerly the deacon of the venerable archbishop Paulinus, as has been said above,[6] kept the true and catholic Easter, with all those that he could persuade to adopt the more correct way. Queen Eanfled and her followers also observed the same, as she had seen it practised in Kent, having with her a priest from Kent, who followed the catholic mode, whose name was Romanus. Thus it is said to have happened in those times that Easter was twice kept in one year; and that when the king, having ended the time of fasting, kept his Easter, then the queen and her followers were still fasting, and celebrating Palm Sunday. This difference about the observance of Easter, whilst Aidan lived, was patiently tolerated by all men, they being perfectly sensible, that though he could not keep Easter contrary to the custom of those who had sent him, yet he industriously laboured to practise all works of faith, piety, and love,

[1] Finan, bishop of Lindisfarne, occupied that see from A.D. 651 to A.D. 661. He occurs in the Calendar, 17th Feb. See Acta SS. Feb. iii. 21.

[2] See § 158. Wooden churches are frequently mentioned in Doomsday Book. Greenstead in Essex is an existing illustration. It is composed of the half trunks of oaks, split through the centre, and roughly hewn at each end, so as to let them into a sill at the bottom and into a plank at the top, to which they are secured by wooden pegs.

[3] This bishop of Lindisfarne occupied his see from A.D. 688 to 698.

[4] On the Paschal controversy, see Smith's Appendix, ix. a, (p. 694,) to his edition of Beda.

[5] Mabillon, Annal. Ord. S. Bened. xv. 36, (i. 474,) expresses his conviction that this is the "Peregrinus ex genere Scottorum," who is mentioned under the name of Romanus in a charter reciting the foundation of an ecclesiastical establishment at Mazeroles, on the river Vienne in Picardy, of which he and his "peregrini" were the first occupants. See also Gall. Christ. ii. 1222.

[6] See § 149.

according to the custom of all holy men; for which reason he was deservedly beloved by all, even by those who differed in opinion concerning Easter, and was held in veneration, not only by the middle classes, but even by the bishops themselves, Honorius of Canterbury, and Felix of the East Angles.

§ 227. But after the death of Finan, who succeeded him, when Colman,[1] who was also sent out of Scotland, came to be bishop, [A.D. 661,] a greater controversy arose about the observance of Easter, and also concerning the rules of ecclesiastical life. Whereupon this dispute began to influence the thoughts and hearts of many, who feared, lest, having received the name of Christians, they might happen to run, or to have run, in vain. This reached the ears of king Osuiu and his son Alchfrid; for Osuiu, having been instructed and baptized by the Scots, and being very perfectly skilled in their language, thought nothing better than what they taught. But Alchfrid, having been instructed in Christianity by Uilfrid,[2] (a most learned man, who had first gone to Rome to learn the ecclesiastical doctrine, and spent much time at Lyons with Dalfin, archbishop of Gaul, from whom also he had received the crown of the ecclesiastical tonsure,) rightly thought that this man's doctrine ought to be preferred before all the traditions of the Scots. For this reason he had also given him a monastery of forty families, at a place called "In Rhypum;"[3] which place, not long before, he had given to those that followed the Scots, for a monastery; but forasmuch as they afterwards, being left to their choice, preferred to quit the place rather than alter their custom, he gave the place to him whose life and doctrine were worthy of it.

§ 228. Agilberct, bishop of the West Saxons, above-mentioned,[4] a friend to king Alchfrid and to abbat Uilfrid, had at that time [A.D. 664] come into the province of the Northumbrians,[5] and was making some stay among them; and at the request of Alchfrid, he made Uilfrid a priest in his aforesaid monastery. He had in his company a priest, whose name was Agatho. The controversy being there started, concerning Easter,[6] and the tonsure,[7] and other ecclesiastical affairs, it was agreed that a synod should be held in the monastery of Streanaeshalch,[8] which signifies the "Bay of the Lighthouse," where the abbess Hild, a woman devoted to God, then presided; and that there this controversy should be decided. The kings, both father and son, came thither; bishop Colman with his clerks from Scotland, and Agilberct, with the priests Agatho and Uilfrid, James and Romanus, were on their side; but the abbess

[1] Colman was bishop of Lindisfarne from 661 to 664. See Acta SS. Febr. iii. 84.

[2] The history of Wilfrid is afterwards narrated at considerable length by Beda.

[3] Now Ripon, in Yorkshire.

[4] See § 170.

[5] The see of York being at this time vacant, it was governed by the bishops of Lindisfarne.

[6] This controversy was occasioned or hastened by the double Easter which, according to the rival modes of computation, would happen in A.D. 665. In this year the church of Rome would celebrate that festival on 6th April, the Scots delaying it until the 13th. See also the Life of Wilfrid, by Eddius, § 10.

[7] Smith has appended to his edition of Beda a valuable dissertation on this question. Appendix, No. ix. b. (p. 705.) See also Ussher, Antiq. Brit. p. 477.

[8] Now Whitby, in Yorkshire.

Hild and her followers were on the side of the Scots, as was also the venerable bishop Cedd, long before ordained by the Scots, as has been said above, and he was in that council a most careful interpreter for both parties.

§ 229. King Osuiu observed, by way of introduction, that it behoved those who together served God to observe the same rule of life; and as they all expected the same kingdom in heaven, so they ought not to differ in the celebration of the divine sacraments; but rather that they should inquire which was the truer tradition, that the same might be generally followed by all; he then commanded his bishop, Colman, first to declare what the rite was which he observed, and whence it derived its origin. Then Colman said, "The Easter which I use to keep, I received from my elders, who sent me as a bishop hither; all our forefathers, men beloved of God, are known to have celebrated it after the same manner; and that the same may not seem to any one contemptible or worthy to be rejected, it is the same which the blessed John the evangelist, the disciple especially beloved of our Lord, with all the churches over which he presided, is recorded to have observed." Having said thus much, and more to the like effect, the king commanded Agilberct also to show whence his custom of keeping Easter was derived, or on what authority it was grounded. Agilberct answered, "I desire that my disciple, the priest Uilfrid, may speak in my stead; because we both concur with the other followers of the ecclesiastical tradition that are here present, and he can better and more clearly explain our opinion in the English language, than I can by an interpreter."

§ 230. Then Uilfrid, being ordered by the king to speak, delivered himself thus:—"The Easter which we observe, we saw celebrated by all at Rome, where the blessed apostles Peter and Paul lived, taught, suffered, and were buried; we saw the same done in Italy and in Gaul, when we travelled through those countries for the sake of learning and prayer. We found the same practised in Africa, Asia, Egypt, Greece, and all the world, wherever the church of Christ is spread abroad, through different tongues and nations, at one and the same time; except only these and their accomplices in obstinacy, I mean the Picts and the Britons, who, with foolish labour, in these two remote islands of the world, and only in part even of them, oppose all the rest of the universe." When he had so said, Colman answered, "It is strange that you will call our labours foolish, wherein we follow the example of so great an apostle, who was thought worthy to lay his head on our Lord's bosom, when all the world knows him to have lived most wisely." Uilfrid replied, "Far be it from us to charge John with folly, when he literally observed the precepts of the Mosaic law, whilst the church still Judaized in many points, and the apostles were not able at once to cast off every observance of the law which had been instituted by God. In which way it is necessary that all who come to the faith should forsake the idols which were invented by devils, that they might not give scandal to the Jews that were among the gentiles. For this reason it was that Paul circumcised

Timothy, that he offered sacrifice in the Temple, that he shaved his head with Aquila and Priscilla at Corinth; for no other advantage than to avoid giving scandal to the Jews. Hence it was, that James said, to the same Paul, 'You see, brother, how many thousands of the Jews have believed; and they are all zealous for the law.' [Acts xxi. 20.] And yet, at this time, the gospel spreading throughout the world, it is needless, nay, it is not lawful, for the faithful either to be circumcised, or to offer up to God sacrifices of the flesh of victims. So John, pursuant to the custom of the law, began the celebration of the feast of Easter on the fourteenth day of the first month, in the evening, not regarding whether the same happened on a Saturday, or any other day. But when Peter preached at Rome, being mindful that our Lord arose from the dead, and gave the world the hopes of resurrection, on the first day of the week, he concluded that Easter ought to be observed, so as always to await the rising of the moon on the fourteenth day of the first month, in the evening, according to the custom and precepts of the law, even as John did. And when that came, if the Lord's day, then called the first day, was the next morning of the week, he began that very evening to keep Easter, as we do at this day. But if the Lord's day did not fall the next morning after the fourteenth moon, but on the sixteenth, or the seventeenth, or any other moon till the twenty-first, he waited for that, and on the Saturday before, in the evening, began to observe the holy solemnity of Easter. Thus it came to pass, that Easter Sunday was kept only from the fifteenth moon to the twenty-first. Nor does this evangelical and apostolic tradition abolish the law, but rather fulfil it; the command being to keep the passover from the fourteenth moon of the first month in the evening to the twenty-first moon of the same month in the evening; which observance all the successors of St. John in Asia, since his death, and all the church throughout the world, have since followed; and that this is the true Easter, and the only one to be kept by the faithful, was not newly decreed by the Council of Nice, but only confirmed afresh; as the Church History informs us.

§ 231. "Thus it appears, that you, Colman, neither follow the example of John, as you imagine, nor that of Peter, whose tradition you knowingly contradict; and that you neither agree with the law nor the gospel in the keeping of your Easter. For John, keeping the Paschal time according to the decrees of the Mosaic law, had no regard to the first day of the week, which you do not practise, who celebrate Easter only on the first day of the week. Peter kept Easter Sunday from the fifteenth to the twenty-first moon, which you do not, but you keep Easter Sunday from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon; so that you often begin Easter on the thirteenth moon in the evening, whereof neither has the law made any mention. Nor did our Lord, the Author and Giver of the gospel, on that day, but on the fourteenth, either eat the old passover in the evening, or deliver the sacraments of the New Testament, to be celebrated by the church, in commemoration of his passion. Besides, in your celebration of Easter, you utterly exclude

the twenty-first moon, which the law ordered to be principally observed. Thus, as I said before, you agree neither with John nor Peter, nor with the law, nor the gospel, in the celebration of this greatest festival."

§ 232. To this Colman rejoined: "Did Anatolius, a holy man, and much commended in the Church History, act contrary to the law and the gospel, when he wrote, that Easter was to be celebrated from the fourteenth to the twentieth? Is it to be believed that our most reverend father Columba and his successors, men beloved by God, who kept Easter after the same manner, thought or acted contrary to the divine writings? Whereas there were many among them, whose sanctity is testified by heavenly signs and the working of miracles which they performed; whose life, customs, and discipline I never cease to follow, nor question their sanctity."

§ 233. "It is evident," said Uilfrid, "that Anatolius was a most holy, learned, and commendable man; but what have you to do with him, since you do not even observe his decrees? For he, following the rule of truth in his Easter, appointed a revolution of nineteen years, which either you are ignorant of; or if you know it, though it is kept by the whole church of Christ, yet you despise it. He so computed the fourteenth moon in the Easter of our Lord, that according to the custom of the Egyptians, he acknowledged it to be the fifteenth moon in the evening; so in like manner he assigned the twentieth to Easter Sunday, as believing that to be the twenty-first moon, when the sun had set, of which his rule of distinction it appears you are ignorant, in that you sometimes most obviously keep Easter before the full of the moon, that is, on the thirteenth moon. Concerning your father Columba, and his followers, whose sanctity you say you imitate, and whose rule and precepts you observe, which have been confirmed by signs from heaven, I might answer, that when many, on the day of judgment, shall say to our Lord, that in his name they prophesied, and cast out devils, and wrought many wonders, our Lord will reply, that He never knew them. But far be it from me, that I should say so of your fathers, because it is much more just to believe what is good, than what is evil, of persons whom one does not know. Wherefore I do not deny those to have been God's servants, and beloved by Him, who with rustic simplicity, but pious intentions, have loved Him. Nor do I think that such keeping of Easter was very prejudicial to them, as long as none came to show them how they might follow the decrees of a more perfect rule; and yet I do believe that they, if any catholic adviser had come among them, would have as readily followed his admonitions, as they are known to have kept those commandments of God which they had learned and known.

§ 234. "But as for you and your companions, you certainly sin, if, having heard the decrees of the apostolic see, yea rather of the universal church, and that the same are confirmed by holy writ, you refuse to follow them; for, though your fathers were holy, do you think that their small number, in one corner of a very remote island, is to be preferred before the universal church of Christ throughout the world? And if that Columba of yours, (and I may

say, ours also, if he were Christ's,) was a holy man and powerful in miracles, yet should he be preferred before the most blessed prince of the apostles, to whom our Lord said, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven?'" [Matt. xvi. 18.]

§ 235. When Uilfrid had spoken thus, the king said, "Is it true, or not, Colman, that these words were spoken to Peter by our Lord?" He answered, "It is true, O king!" Then said he, "Can you show any such power given to your Columba?" Colman answered, "None." Then added the king, "Do you both agree that without any dispute these words were principally spoken to Peter, and that the keys of the kingdom of heaven were given to him by the Lord?" They both answered, "We do." Then the king concluded, "And I also say unto you, that he is that doorkeeper, whom I will not contradict, but, as far as I know and am able, I desire in all things to obey his decrees; lest, when I come to the gates of the kingdom of heaven, there should be none to open them, he being my adversary who is admitted to have the keys." The king having said this, all present, as well those who sat as those who stood, both great and small, gave their assent, and renouncing the more imperfect institution, hastened to conform themselves to that which they had found to be better.

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CHAP. XXVI. [A.D. 664.]—COLMAN, BEING WORSTED, RETURNED HOME; TUDA SUCCEEDED HIM IN THE BISHOPRIC; AND OF THE STATE OF THE CHURCH UNDER THOSE TEACHERS.

§ 236. THE disputation being ended[1] and the company broken up, Agilberct returned home. Colman, perceiving that his doctrine was rejected, and his sect despised, took with him such as were willing to follow him, and would not comply with the catholic Easter and the tonsure of the crown, (for there was much controversy about that also,) and went back[2] into Scotland, to consult with his people what was to be done in this case. Cedd, forsaking the practices of the Scots, returned to his bishopric, having acknowledged the catholic observance of Easter. This disputation happened in the year of our Lord's incarnation 664, which was the twenty-second year of the reign of king Osuiu, and the thirtieth of the episcopacy of the Scots, in the province of the Angles, for Aidan was bishop seventeen years, Finan ten, and Colman three.

§ 237. When Colman had returned into his own country, Christ's

[1] By the aid of a charter printed in the Monasticon Anglic. i. 65, (presuming it to be genuine,) we learn that the council had terminated before 26th March, 664, upon which day Deusdedit, archbishop of Canterbury, completed the ninth and commenced the tenth year of his presulate (cf. § 209). In the charter referred to, which professes to have been written immediately after the termination of the council, he mentions his ninth pontifical year as yet unexpired.

[2] Mabillon (Act. SS. Ord. S. Bened. iii. 151, § 4, ed. Venet.) attempts to show that Beda has here fallen into error regarding the residence of this Agilberct; but the accuracy of our author in this respect is supported by Pagi, A.D. 664, § 6.

servant, Tuda,[1] was made bishop of the Northumbrians in his place, having been instructed and ordained bishop among the southern Scots, having also the ecclesiastical tonsure of his crown, according to the custom[2] of that province, and observing the catholic time of Easter. He was a good and religious man, but governed his church a very short time; he came out of Scotland whilst Colman was yet bishop, and both by word and work diligently taught all persons those things that appertain to the faith and truth. But Eata,[3] who was abbat in the monastery which is called Melrose, a most reverend and meek man, was appointed provost over the brethren who preferred to stay in the church of Lindisfarne, when the Scots went away. They say that Colman, before his departure, requested and obtained this of king Osuiu, because Eata was one of Aidan's twelve boys of the English nation, whom he received when first made bishop there, to be instructed in Christ; for the king much loved bishop Colman on account of his singular discretion. This is the same Eata, who, not long after, was made bishop of the same church of Lindisfarne. Colman carried home with him part of the bones of the most reverend father Aidan, and left part of them in the church where he had presided, ordering them to be interred in its sacristy.

§ 238. How great was his parsimony, how great his continence, the place which they governed shows for himself and his predecessors; for there were very few houses besides the church found at their departure; indeed, no more than were barely sufficient for their daily residence; they had also no money, but cattle; for if they received any money from rich persons, they immediately gave it to the poor; there being no need to gather money, or provide houses for the entertainment of the great men of the world; for such never resorted to the church, except to pray and hear the word of God. The king himself, when opportunity required, came only with five or six servants, and having performed his devotions in the church, departed. But if they happened to take a repast there, they were satisfied with only the plain and daily food of the brethren, and required no more; for the whole care of those teachers was to serve God, not the world—to feed the soul, and not the belly.

§ 239. For this reason the religious habit was at that time in great veneration; so that wheresoever any cleric or monk happened to come, he was joyfully received by all persons, as God's servant; and if they chanced to meet him as he was upon the

[1] As Tuda attests the Peterborough Charter, (Dugd. Monast. i. 65,) in the capacity of a bishop, he must have been consecrated before 26th March, 664. This inference, however, assumes the authenticity of the charter. And it is worthy of remark also, that he does not here specify the diocese over which he presided; hence he may have attested it simply as a regionary bishop, to whom no peculiar see had been assigned; for Beda here mentions that he had been consecrated bishop prior to his arrival in England.

[2] Ussher shows, from Adamnan and other authorities, that the inhabitants of the southern districts of Ireland adhered in some respects to the discipline of the church of Rome.

[3] Eata was abbot of Lindisfarne from A.D. 664 to 678, when he became its bishop. He died in 685.

way, they ran to him, and bowing, were glad to be signed with his hand, or blessed with his mouth. Great attention was also paid to their exhortations; and on Sundays the people flocked eagerly to the church, or the monasteries, not to feed their bodies, but to hear the Word of God; and if any priest happened to come into a village, the inhabitants flocked together forthwith to hear from him the Word of life. For the priests and clerks went into the villages on no other account than to preach, baptize, visit the sick, and, in few words, to take care of souls; and they were so free from the curse of worldly avarice, that none of them received lands and possessions for building monasteries, unless they were compelled[1] to do so by the temporal authorities; which custom was for some time after observed in all the churches of the Northumbrians. But enough has now been said on this subject.

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CHAP. XXVII. [A.D. 664.]—EGBERT, A HOLY MAN OF THE ENGLISH NATION, LED A MONASTIC LIFE IN IRELAND.

§ 240. In the same year of our Lord's Incarnation, 664, there happened an eclipse of the sun, on the third[2] of the month of May, about the tenth hour of the day. In the same year, a sudden pestilence also, having first depopulated the southern coasts of Britain, and afterwards extending into the province of the Northumbrians, for a long time ravaged the country far and near, and destroyed a great multitude of men. To which plague the aforesaid priest Tuda fell a victim, and was honourably buried in the monastery which is called Paegnalaech.[3] This pestilence did no less harm in the island of Ireland. Many of the nobility, and of the middle ranks of the English nation, were there at that time, who, in the days of the bishops Finan and Colman, forsaking their native island, had retired thither, either for the sake of divine studies, or of a more continent life; and some of them presently devoted themselves faithfully to a monastical life, others chose rather to apply themselves to study, going about from one master's cell to another. The Scots most willingly received them all, and took care to supply them gratuitously with daily food, as also to furnish them with books to read, and their teaching, without making any charge.

§ 241. Among these were Aedilhun and Ecgberct,[4] two youths of great capacity, of the English nobility. The former of whom was brother to Aediluini,[5] a man no less beloved by God, who him-

[1] See an illustration at § 217.

[2] Here Beda is somewhat in error, for the eclipse happened upon the first of May, not the third. See Petavius, De Ratione Temporum, i. 543, ed. fol. 1705; Pagi ad an. 664, § 8; Ussher, p. 491. The Annals of Tigernach are correct in this particular, see O'Connor, Script. Rer. Hibern. i. xcii.; as are those of Ulster, Ussher, p. 490.

[3] The locality is uncertain. Smith is willing to consider it the same as Finchale, near Durham, but this is founded on no satisfactory authority. The abstract of the history of Lindisfarne, in the Durham MS., reads Penalegh. Possibly it is one of those monasteries which were destroyed by the Danes.

[4] See §§ 242, 376, and 446. He died in Iona on Easter-day, 24th April, 729.

[5] See § 182.

self also afterwards went over into Ireland for the sake of study, and having been well instructed, returned into his own country, and being made bishop in the province of Lindissi, long governed that church most worthily. These two being in the monastery which in the language of the Scots is called Rathmelsigi,[1] and having lost all their companions, who were either cut off by the mortality, or dispersed into other places, both fell sick of the same disease, and were very grievously afflicted. Of these, Ecgberct, (as I was informed by a priest very venerable for his age, and of great veracity, who declared he had heard those things from his own mouth,) concluding that he was at the point of death, in the morning went out of his chamber, where the sick people lay, and sitting alone in a convenient place, began seriously to reflect upon his actions; and, being full of compunction at the remembrance of his sins, he bedewed his face with tears, and prayed to God from the bottom of his heart, that he might not die yet, before he could make more perfect amends for the neglect which he had committed in his infancy and younger years, or might further exercise himself in good works. He also vowed a vow that he would, for the sake of God, lead such a pilgrim's life as never to return into the island of Britain, where he was born; that, besides the canonical times of customary singing of psalms, he would, unless prevented by corporeal infirmity, say the whole Psalter daily in commemoration of the praise of God; and that he would every week fast one whole day and a night. Returning home, after having finished his tears, prayers, and vows, he found his companion asleep, and going to bed himself, began to compose himself to rest. When he had lain quiet awhile, his comrade, awaking, looked on him, and said, "Alas! brother Ecgberct, what have you done? I was in hope that we should have entered together into life everlasting; but know that what you prayed for is granted." For he had learned in a vision what the other had requested, and that his prayer was granted. In short, Aedilhun died the next night.

§ 242. But Ecgberct, shaking off his distemper, recovered and lived a long time afterwards to grace the priestly office, which he had received, by his worthy behaviour; and after much increase of virtue, according to his desire, he at length, not long ago, that is, in the year of our Lord's Incarnation 729, being ninety years of age, departed to the heavenly kingdom. He led his life in great perfection of humility, meekness, continence, simplicity, and justice. Thus he was a great benefactor, both to his own nation, and to those of the Scots and Picts among whom he lived a stranger, by his example of life, his industry in teaching, his authority in reproving, and his piety in giving away much of what he received from the bounty of the rich. He also added this to his vow above-mentioned; that always during Lent, he would eat but one meal a day, allowing himself nothing but bread and the thinnest milk, and even that by measure. That milk, new the day

[1] Rathmelsigi, that is, the habitation of Mel, the nephew of Patrick, concerning whom see Acta SS. Mart. ii. 551, 561, 562. It is now called Melfont.

before, he used to keep in a vessel, and the next day skimming off the cream, drank what remained, as has been said, with a little bread. Which kind of abstinence he likewise always observed forty[1] days before the nativity of our Lord, and as many after the completion of the solemnity of Pentecost, that is, of Quinquagesima.

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CHAP. XXVIII. [A.D. 665.]—TUDA BEING DEAD, UILFRID WAS ORDAINED IN GAUL, AND CEADDA AMONG THE WEST SAXONS, TO BE BISHOPS IN THE PROVINCE OF THE NORTHUMBRIANS.

§ 243. IN the meantime,[2] king Alchfrid sent the priest, Uilfrid, to the king of Gaul,[3] to be consecrated bishop over him and his people; but that prince sent him to be ordained[4] by Agilberct, who, as was said above,[5] having left Britain, was made bishop of the city of Paris,[6] and by him Uilfrid was honourably consecrated, many bishops meeting together for that purpose in a village[7] belonging to the king, called Compiegne.[8] While he was making some stay in the parts beyond the sea, in consequence of his ordination, king Osuiu, following the example of his son,[9] sent a holy man, of modest behaviour, sufficiently well read in the Scriptures, and diligently practising those things which he had learned therein, to be ordained bishop of the church of York. This was a priest called Ceadda,[10] brother to the most reverend prelate Cedd, of whom mention has been often made,[11] and abbat of the monastery of Laestingaeu.[12] With him the king also sent his priest Eadhaed,[13] who was afterwards, in the reign of Ecgfrid, made bishop of the church of Ripon. On arriving in Kent, they found that archbishop Deusdedit[14] had departed this life, and that no other prelate had as yet been appointed in his place; whereupon they proceeded to the province of the West Saxons, where Uini was bishop, and by him the person above mentioned was consecrated bishop; two bishops of the British nation, who kept Easter Sunday according to the canonical manner, from the fourteenth to the twentieth day

[1] On this threefold fast see Theodore's Penitential, in Thorpe's Ancient Laws, ii. 65.

[2] The consecration of Wilfred, as bishop of York, has generally been assigned to A.D. 664; but Pagi clearly shows, A.D. 665, § 16, that it did not take place until the following year. To that year I have ventured to assign it, although unsupported by Smith and Petrie.

[3] Namely, Clothaire III, who reigned from A.D. 662 to 676.

[4] Wilfrid objected to being consecrated by the bishops who were then in England, inasmuch as they were either converts to the Scottish calculation regarding Easter-day, or that they had received their ordination from those bishops who held that objectionable opinion. See Vita Wilfridi auctore Heddio, § 12, ed. Gale, p. 57.

[5] See § 170.

[6] See Gall. Christ. vii. 27.

[7] It was the residence of Clothaire I, Childebert III, and of several other of the earlier French kings. Bouquet, iii. 321, 696.

[8] Now Compiègne. See Gall. Christ. ix. 434.

[9] Namely, of Alchfrid, the patron of Wilfrid.

[10] See Acta SS. Mart. i. 143.

[11] See §§ 211, 214, 216—219.

[12] See § 218.

[13] See § 288.

[14] Deusdedit having died 14th July, 664, his decease must have been well known to Osuiu in 666; whence we may infer that the king presumed that Ceadda would, upon his arrival in Kent, receive consecration from the newly and canonically ordained archbishop Wighard. But the unexpected death of that prelate caused application to be made to Wini, the next best authority.

of the moon, as has been frequently said, being added to assist at the ordination;[1] for at that time there was no other bishop in all Britain canonically[2] ordained, besides that Uini.

§ 244. Ceadda, being thus consecrated[3] bishop, began immediately to devote himself to ecclesiastical truth and to chastity; to apply himself to humility, continence, and study; to travel about, not on horseback, but after the manner of the apostles, on foot, preaching the gospel in towns, in the open country, in cottages, villages, and castles; for he was one of the disciples of Aidan, and endeavoured to instruct his people by the same actions and behaviour, according to his and his brother Cedd's example. Uilfrid also having been made a bishop, came into[4] Britain, and in like manner by his doctrine brought into the English church very many rules of catholic observance. Whence it followed, that the catholic institution daily gained strength, and all the Scots that dwelt among the Angles, either submitted to these persons, or returned into their own country.

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CHAP. XXIX. [A.D. 665.]—HOW THE PRIEST UIGHARD WAS SENT FROM BRITAIN TO ROME, THAT HE MIGHT BE CONSECRATED ARCHBISHOP; OF HIS DEATH THERE, AND OF THE LETTERS OF THE APOSTOLIC POPE GIVING IN REPLY AN ACCOUNT THEREOF.

§ 245. AT this[5] time, the most noble kings of the Angles, namely, Osuiu, of the province of the Northumbrians, and Ecgberct of Kent, having consulted together as to what should be done about the state of the English church, (for Osuiu, though educated by the Scots, perfectly understood that the Roman was the catholic and apostolic church,) with the election and consent of the holy church of the English nation, made choice of a good man, and a priest fit to be made a bishop, called Uighard, one of bishop Deusdedit's clergy,[6] and sent him to Rome to be ordained bishop, to the end that he, having received the rank of an archbishop, might ordain catholic prelates for the churches of the English nation throughout all Britain. But Uighard, arriving at Rome, was cut off by death, before he could be consecrated to the office of bishop; and the following letter was sent back into Britain to king Osuiu:—

§ 246. "*To the excellent Lord, our son, Osuiu, king of the Saxons, Vitalian, bishop, servant of the servants of God.* We have received your excellency's pleasing letters; by reading whereof we understand your most pious devotion and fervent love to obtain everlasting

[1] Theodore was not satisfied with the canonical validity of Ceadda's consecration, in consequence of these circumstances, and at a later time he was reconsecrated. See § 258.

[2] Wini had been ordained in Gaul. See § 170.

[3] His accession to the bishopric of York is generally ascribed to the year 664, Wharton, Smith, and Petrie agreeing in this point; but Pagi, A.D. 666, § 6, advances powerful arguments for fixing it to the year 661.

[4] Namely, in 666. See Pagi, ad an. § 18.

[5] Smith, upon the authority of the Saxon Chronicle and Florence of Worcester, ascribes this mission to 667. The succession of events would lead us to infer that it occurred somewhat earlier, apparently in 665, and to this year it is assigned by Jaffé in his Regesta Pontiff. Roman. ad an.

[6] He was the first of the secular clergy who succeeded to the dignity of archbishop of Canterbury.

life; and that by the protecting hand of God you have been converted to the true and apostolic faith, hoping that as you reign in your nation, so you will hereafter reign together in Christ. Blessed be the nation, therefore, that has been found worthy to have such a most wise king and worshipper of God; forasmuch as he is not himself alone a worshipper of God, but also studies day and night how he may accomplish the conversion of all his subjects to the catholic and apostolic faith, for the redemption of his own soul. Who will not rejoice at hearing such pleasant things? Who will not exult and be delighted at such good works? Because your nation has believed in Christ the Almighty God, according to the words of the divine prophets, as it is written in Isaiah,[1] 'In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to him shall the gentiles seek.' And again, 'Listen, O isles, unto me, and hearken, ye people, from afar.' And a little after, 'It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel. I will also give thee for a light to the gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth.' And again, 'Kings shall see, princes also shall arise and worship.' And presently after, 'I have given thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, and possess the desolate heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves.' And again, 'I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a light of the gentiles, and for a covenant of the people; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoner from the prison, and them that sit in darkness from the prison-house.'

§ 247. "Behold, most excellent son, how plain and clear it is, not only of you, but also of all the nations of the prophets, that they shall believe in Christ, the Creator of all things. Wherefore, it behoves your highness, as being a member of Christ, in all things continually to follow the pious rule of the prince of the apostles, in celebrating Easter, and in all things delivered by the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, whose doctrine daily enlightens the hearts of believers, even as the two heavenly lights, [the sun and moon,] daily illumine the earth."

§ 248. And[2] after some lines, wherein he speaks of celebrating Easter uniformly throughout all the world, he adds,—

"We have not been able now to find, considering the length of the journey, a man, docile, and qualified in all respects to be a bishop, according to the tenor of your letters. But as soon as such a proper person shall be found, we will send him well instructed to your country, that he may, by word of mouth, and through the divine oracles, with the assistance of God, root out all the enemy's tares throughout your island. We have received the presents sent

[1] Isa. xi. 10; xli. 10; xlix. 1, 7, 8, 9; xlii. 6, 7.

[2] Here, as in § 144, Beda has omitted those passages which relate to the subject of Easter. The intermediate passage is quoted by Ussher from a manuscript which he thinks might originally have belonged to the monastery of Whitby. It refers to the authority of the Council of Nice, and to SS. Cyril and Dionysius. See Syllog. Epp. Hibern. Ep. ix. note.

by your highness to the blessed prince of the apostles, for an eternal memorial, and return you thanks, and always pray for your safety along with the clergy of Christ. But he who offered these presents has been removed out of this world, and is buried at the church of the apostles, for whom we have been much concerned, because he died here. However, we have ordered the blessed gifts of the saints, that is, the relics of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and of the holy martyrs Laurentius, John, and Paul, and Gregory, and Pancratius, to be delivered to the bearers of these our letters, to be by them delivered to your excellency. And to your consort also, our spiritual daughter, we have by the aforesaid bearers sent a cross, with a gold key to it, made out of the most holy chains of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul; for at her pious endeavours all the apostolic see rejoices with us, inasmuch as her pious works are fragrant and blossom before God.

§ 249. "We therefore desire your highness will hasten, according to our wish, to dedicate all your island to Christ our God; for it certainly has for its protector the Redeemer of mankind, our Lord Jesus Christ, who will prosper it in all things, that it may bring together a new people of Christ, establishing there the catholic and apostolic faith. For it is written,[1] 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.' Truly your highness seeks, and shall no doubt obtain, that all your island shall be made subject to you, as is our wish and desire. Saluting your excellency with fatherly affection, we always pray to the divine goodness, that it will vouchsafe to assist you and yours in all good works, that you may reign with Christ in the world to come. May the heavenly grace preserve your excellency in safety!"

In the next book[2] we shall have a more suitable occasion to show who was found out and consecrated in Uighard's place.

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CHAP. XXX. [A.D. 665.]—HOW THE EAST SAXONS, DURING A PESTILENCE, RETURNING TO IDOLATRY, ARE IMMEDIATELY BROUGHT BACK FROM THEIR ERROR BY THE INSTANCE OF BISHOP JARUMAN.

§ 250. AT the same time, the kings[3] Sigheri and Sebbi, though subject to Uulfhere, king of the Mercians, governed the province of the East Saxons after Suidhelm, of whom we have spoken above.[4] That province labouring under the aforesaid mortality, Sigheri, with that part of the people that was under his dominion forsook the sacraments of the christian faith, and turned apostate. For the king himself, and many of the commons and great men being fond of this life, and not seeking after that which is to come, or rather not believing that there was any other, began to restore the temples that had been abandoned, and to adore idols, as if they might by them be protected against the mortality. But Sebbi, his

[1] Matt. vi. 33. [2] See § 254.

[3] These two subreguli, although ruling each over his own district in East Saxony, were under the control of the superior king of Mercia. Sigheri, the son of Sigeberct the Little, was the husband of St. Osithe; Sebbi, the son of Seward, resigned his kingdom, and died A.D. 694. [4] See § 216.

companion and co-heir in the kingdom, with all his people, very devoutly preserved the faith which he had embraced, and, as we shall show[1] hereafter, ended his faithful life with much felicity.

§ 251. King Uulfhere, understanding that the faith of the province was partly profaned, sent bishop Jaruman, who was successor to Trumheri, to correct that error, and restore the province to the truth. He proceeded with much discretion, (as I was informed by a priest who bore him company in that journey, and had been his fellow-labourer in the Word,) for he was a religious and good man, and having travelled through all the country, far and near, reduced both the aforesaid king and people to the way of righteousness; so that, either forsaking or destroying the temples and altars which they had erected, they opened the churches, and rejoiced in confessing the Name of Christ, which they had denied, being more desirous to die in Him with the faith of the resurrection, than to live in the filth of apostasy among their idols. These things being performed, their priests and teachers returned home with joy.

## BOOK IV.

CHAP. I. [A.D. 664.]—HOW DEUSDEDIT, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, DYING, UIGHARD WAS SENT TO ROME TO RECEIVE THE EPISCOPATE; BUT HE DYING THERE, THEODORE WAS ORDAINED ARCHBISHOP, AND SENT INTO BRITAIN WITH THE ABBAT HADRIAN.

§ 252. IN the above-mentioned year of the aforesaid eclipse, which was presently followed by the pestilence, in which also bishop Colman, being overcome by the unanimous consent of the catholics, returned home, Deusdedit, the sixth bishop of the church of Canterbury, died on the day before the ides of July [14th July]. Erconberct, also, king of Kent, departed this life on the same month and day; leaving his kingdom to his son Ecgberct, which he held nine years.[2] The see then became vacant for some considerable time,[3] until the priest Uighard, a man most skilled in ecclesiastical discipline, one of the English race, was sent to Rome by the said king Ecgberct, and Osuiu, king of the Northumbrians, as was briefly mentioned in the foregoing book,[4] with a request that he might be ordained archbishop of the church of the English; sending at the same time presents to the apostolic pope, and many vessels of gold and silver. Arriving at Rome, where Vitalian[5] presided at that time over the apostolic see, and having made known to the aforesaid apostolic pope the occasion of his journey, he was not long after snatched away, with almost all his companions that went with him, by a pestilence which happened at that time.

[1] See §§ 283—285.
[2] He died in July, A.D. 673; § 271.
[3] Namely, from 14th July, 664, when Deusdedit died, until 26th March, 668, when Theodore was consecrated.
[4] See §§ 245, 248.
[5] Vitalian was consecrated 30th July, 657, and was buried 27th Jan. 672.

§ 253. But the apostolic pope having consulted about that affair, made diligent inquiry for some one whom he might send[1] to be archbishop of the English churches. There was then in the Hiridian[2] monastery, which is not far from the city of Naples in Campania, an abbat, called Hadrian, by nation an African, well versed in holy writ, experienced in monastical and ecclesiastical discipline, and excellently skilled both in the Greek and Latin tongues. The pope, sending for him, commanded him to accept the bishopric, and repair into Britain; he answered, that he was unworthy of so great a dignity, but said he could name another, whose more advanced learning and age were fitter for the episcopal office. And having proposed to the pope a certain monk, belonging to a neighbouring monastery of virgins, whose name was Andrew, he was by all that knew him judged worthy of a bishopric; but the pressure of bodily infirmity prevented his being advanced to the episcopal station. Then again Hadrian was pressed to accept the bishopric; but he desired a respite for a time, in order to see whether he could find another fit to be ordained bishop.

§ 254. There was at that time in Rome a monk, called Theodore,[3] well known to Hadrian, born at Tarsus in Cilicia, a man well instructed in worldly and divine literature, as also in Greek and Latin; of known probity of life, and venerable for age, being sixty-six years old. Hadrian offered him to the pope that he might be ordained bishop, and prevailed; but upon these conditions, that he should conduct him into Britain, because he had already travelled through France twice upon several occasions, and was, therefore, better acquainted with the way, and was, moreover, sufficiently provided with men of his own; as also that being his fellow-labourer in doctrine, he might take special care that Theodore should not, according to the custom of the Greeks, introduce any thing contrary[4] to the true faith into the church over which he presided. Hadrian, being ordained subdeacon, waited four months for his hair to grow, that it might be shorn into the shape of a crown; for he had the tonsure of St. Paul the apostle, after the manner of the eastern people. He was ordained by pope Vitalian, in the year of our Lord's Incarnation 668, on Sunday, the seventh of the kalends of April [26th March]; and on the sixth of the kalends of June, [27th May,] he was sent together with Hadrian into Britain.

§ 255. They proceeded together by sea to Marseilles, and thence

[1] The incidents detailed in this chapter have been the prolific source of much and bitter controversy. It is assumed, on the one hand, that this act of the pope, in electing and transmitting an archbishop to the English nation, was in virtue of the plenitude of the papal power with which he had been invested as the successor of St. Peter. On the other hand, the members of our own church contend that the circumstances here recorded warrant no such conclusion.

[2] The reading here followed is that of More's MS.; the others reading "Niridian." Supposed to be near Monte Cassino.

[3] Of what order was Theodore? Probably of the order of St. Basil. It is certain, from the nature of his tonsure, that he was not of any of the western orders. See Menard in Com. Regul. cap. lxii. § 10; and upon the tonsure itself, Smith's Appendix to Beda, ix. b. may be consulted.

[4] Yet Theodore has left traces of the oriental character of his theology in the Penitential which he drew up for the use of the Anglo-Saxon church.

by land to Arles, and having there delivered to John,[1] archbishop of that city, pope Vitalian's letters of recommendation, were by him detained till Ebrin,[2] the king's mayor of the palace, sent them a pass to go wherever they pleased. Having received the same, Theodore repaired to Agilberct, bishop of Paris, of whom we have spoken above,[3] and was by him kindly received, and long entertained. Hadrian went first to Emme,[4] and then to Faro,[5] bishops of Sens and Meaux, and lived under them a considerable time; for the hard winter had obliged them to rest wherever they could. King Ecgberct, being informed by trustworthy messengers that the bishop they had asked of the Roman prelate was in the kingdom of France, immediately sent thither his prefect, Raedfrid, to conduct him; who, being arrived there, with Ebrin's leave, conveyed him to the port of Quentavic;[6] where, being indisposed, he made some short stay, and as soon as he began to recover, sailed over into Britain. But Ebrin detained Hadrian, suspecting that he went on some embassy from the emperor[7] to the kings of Britain, to the prejudice of the kingdom, which at that time was under his especial care;[8] however, when he found that he really had no such commission, he discharged him, and permitted him to follow Theodore. As soon as he joined him, he received from him the monastery of St. Peter[9] the apostle, where the archbishops of Canterbury are usually buried, as I have said before;[10] for at his departure, the apostolic lord had ordered that he should provide for him in his diocese, and give him a suitable place in which to reside along with his followers.

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CHAP. II. [A.D. 669.]—THEODORE VISITS ALL PLACES; THE CHURCHES OF THE ENGLISH BEGIN TO BE INSTRUCTED IN HOLY LITERATURE, AND IN THE CATHOLIC TRUTH; PUTTA IS MADE BISHOP OF THE CHURCH OF ROCHESTER IN THE ROOM OF DAMIANUS.

§ 256. THEODORE arrived at his church in the second year after his consecration, on Sunday, the sixth of the kalends of June, [27th of May,] and held the same twenty-one years, three months, and twenty-six days. Soon after, he visited[11] all the island, wherever the tribes of the Angles inhabited, for he was most willingly

[1] See Gall. Christ. i. 542.

[2] He succeeded Erchinwald (who has been already mentioned § 208) in 656; Pagi, ad an. § 24; and after perpetrating many and great crimes and cruelties, he was slain A.D. 680. Fridegarii Contin. ap. Bouquet, ii. 451.

[3] See §§ 170, 228, 236, 243.

[4] Emme was bishop of Sens from 658 to 675; Gall. Christ. xii. 9.

[5] Faro, or Burgundo-Faro, was bishop of Meaux from 626 until 672. His life, written by Hildegarius, a successor in the see, is printed by Mabillon, Acta Ord. S. Bened. ii. 580.

[6] Now St. Josse-sur-Mer, or Estaples.

[7] Constantius Pogonatus succeeded his father Constans in 668. Pagi ad an. § 3. We have no information as to the grounds of the suspicion which Ebrin is here said to have entertained.

[8] Contemporary histories abound with details as to the power and tyranny of this individual. See Pagi, A.D. 668, §§ 8—11; 674, §§ 4, 5.

[9] Afterwards St. Augustine's monastery. See Dugd. Monast. i. 23, ed. 1655. Somner, in his History of Canterbury, states that Theodore founded a college or academy in that city.

[10] See §§ 79, 96.

[11] The Kentish historian Thorne, col. 1769, tells us that Vitalian had invested Theodore with legatine authority over the whole of England, Scotland, and Ireland. This, however, is the idea of a later period of history.

entertained and heard by all persons; and being everywhere attended and assisted by Hadrian, he disseminated the right rule of life, and the canonical custom of celebrating Easter. This was the first archbishop whom all the English church obeyed. And forasmuch as both of them were, as has been said before,[1] well read both in sacred and in secular literature, they gathered a crowd of disciples, and there daily flowed from them rivers of knowledge to water the hearts of their hearers; and, together with the books of holy writ, they also taught them the arts of poetry, astronomy, and ecclesiastical arithmetic. A testimony of which is, that there are still living at this day some of their scholars, who are as well versed in the Greek and Latin[2] tongues as in their own, in which they were born. Nor were there ever happier times since the Angles came into Britain; for their kings, being very brave men and very good Christians, they were a terror to all barbarous nations, and the minds of all men were bent upon the joys of the heavenly kingdom of which they had just heard; and all who desired to be instructed in sacred reading had masters at hand to teach them.

§ 257. From that time also they began in all the churches of the English to learn ecclesiastical music, which till then had been only known in Kent. And, excepting James above-mentioned,[3] the first singing-master in the churches of the Northumbrians was Aeddi,[4] surnamed Stephen, invited from Kent by the most reverend Uilfrid, who was the first of the bishops of the English nation that taught the churches of the English the catholic mode of life.

§ 258. Thus Theodore, visiting all parts, ordained bishops in proper places, and with their assistance corrected such things as he found faulty. Among the rest, when he upbraided bishop Ceadda that he had not been duly consecrated,[5] he, with great humility, answered, "If you are persuaded that I have not duly received episcopal ordination, I willingly resign the office, for I never thought myself worthy of it; but, though unworthy, in obedience to authority submitted to undertake it." Theodore, hearing his humble answer, said that he should not resign the bishopric, and he himself completed his ordination after the catholic manner. But at the time when Deusdedit died, and a bishop for the church of Canterbury was requested, ordained and sent, Uilfrid was also sent out of

[1] See § 253.

[2] Archbishop Parker in his Antiquitates Britannicæ, p. 80, says that manuscript copies of the works of Homer, the works of St. John Chrysostom, the Psalms of David, and the Hypomnesticon of Josephus, formerly belonging to Theodore, were in existence in the reign of queen Elizabeth. But as no great destruction of MSS. has taken place since her reign, and as none such as those here described are now known to exist, we may be permitted to doubt the truth of this statement. The knowledge of the writers of that day as to the age of MSS. was very vague and incorrect. In the Public Library at Cambridge (F. f. i. 26) is a copy of Euthymius in Cantica, said by Parker to have belonged to archbishop Theodore, but which in truth is a manuscript of the fifteenth century.

[3] See §§ 136, 149, 226.

[4] Concerning this writer, whose life of Wilfrid of York furnishes so much valuable collateral information to Beda's account of that remarkable individual, see Wright's Biog. Angl. Sax. p. 229. A translation of this piece of biography will be given in the present collection of historians.

[5] Theodore was opposed to Ceadda's consecration, both because he occupied a see to which Wilfrid had been elected, and also because he had been ordained by those who adhered to the British mode of calculating Easter.

Britain into France to be ordained; and because he returned before Theodore, he also ordained priests and deacons in Kent till the archbishop should come to his see. Being arrived in the city of Rochester, where the see had been long vacant[1] by the death of Damianus, he ordained a person better skilled in ecclesiastical discipline, and more addicted to simplicity of life than active in worldly affairs. His name was Putta, and he was extraordinarily skilful in church music, according to the custom of the Romans, which he had learned from the disciples of the holy pope Gregory.

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CHAP. III. [A.D. 669.]—HOW CEADDA, ABOVE MENTIONED, WAS MADE BISHOP OF THE PROVINCE OF THE MERCIANS. OF HIS LIFE, DEATH, AND BURIAL.

§ 259. AT that time the province of the Mercians was governed by king Uulfheri,[2] who, on the death of Jaruman, desired of Theodore to supply him and his people with a bishop; but Theodore would not ordain a new one for them, but requested of king Osuiu that Ceadda might be given them as their bishop. He then lived retired at his monastery, which is at Laestingaeu, Uilfrid administering the bishopric of York, and of all the Northumbrians, and likewise of the Picts, as far[3] as the dominions of king Osuiu extended. And, seeing that it was the custom of that most reverend prelate to go about the work of the gospel to several places rather on foot[4] than on horseback, Theodore commanded him to ride whenever he had a long journey to undertake; and finding him very unwilling to omit, out of love to it, his former pious labour, he himself, with his hands, lifted him on the horse; for he thought him a holy man, and therefore obliged him to ride wherever he had need to go. Ceadda having received the bishopric of the nation of the Mercians as well as of the Lindisfari,[5] took care to administer the same with great rectitude of life, according to the example of the ancient fathers. King Uulfheri also gave him land for fifty families, to build a monastery, at the place called "Ad Baruae,"[6] or "At the Wood," in the province of Lindissi, wherein traces of the regular life instituted by him continue to this day.

§ 260. He had his episcopal see in the place called Lyccidfelth, in which he also died, and was buried, and where the see of the succeeding bishops of that province continues to this day. He had built himself a habitation not far from the church, wherein he was

[1] Apparently from about the middle of the year 664, to the middle of 669. See Wharton, Angl. Sacr. i. 330.

[2] He was son of Penda, and became king of Mercia A.D. 658, and died in 675. See the Chronological Abstract appended to the Ecclesiastical History under that date.

[3] The extent of Wilfrid's diocese may be better understood by comparing this passage with what we have been already told of the extent of Osuiu's kingdom, § 100.

[4] See § 244.

[5] The province of the Lindisfari consisted of 7000 hides, if we may believe the calculation of the Red Book of the Exchequer; Gale, i. 748. It appears to have included all those midland counties which were not comprehended in Mercia, and at a later period was governed by under-kings. See Lappenb. i. 249.

[6] Of uncertain locality; Smith (followed by Petrie) conjectures Barton-on-Humber; but it seems to me more probable that it was the place now called Barrow, near Goxhill, in Lincolnshire.

wont privately to pray and read with seven or eight of the brethren, as often as he had any spare time from the labour and ministry of the Word. When he had most gloriously governed the church in that province two years and a half, the divine providence so ordaining, there came round a season like that of which Ecclesiastes[1] says, "That there is a time to cast stones, and a time to gather them;" for there happened a mortality sent from heaven, which, by means of the death of the flesh, translated the stones of the church from their earthly places to the heavenly building. And when, after many of the church of that most reverend prelate had been withdrawn from the flesh, his hour also drew near wherein he was to pass out of this world to our Lord, it happened one day that he was in the aforesaid dwelling with only one brother, called Ouini,[2] his other companions being upon some reasonable occasion returned to the church. Now Ouini was a monk of great merit, having forsaken the world with the pure intention of obtaining the heavenly reward; worthy in all respects to have the secrets of our Lord specially revealed to him, and worthy to have credit given by his hearers to what he said, for he had come with queen Aedilthryde[3] from the province of the East Angles, and was her prime minister, and governor of her household. As the fervour of his faith increased, resolving to renounce the world, he did not go about it slothfully, but so fully forsook the things of this world, that, quitting all he had, clad only in a plain garment, and carrying an axe and hatchet in his hand, he came to the monastery of that most reverend prelate, called Laestingaeu; thereby intimating, that he did not go to the monastery to live idle, as some do, but to labour,[4] which he also confirmed by practice; for as he was less capable of meditating on the Holy Scriptures, so he the more earnestly applied himself to the labour of his hands. In short, he was received by the bishop into the house aforesaid, out of respect to his devotion, and there entertained with the brethren; and whilst they were engaged within in reading, he was without, at work, doing such things as were necessary.

§ 261. One day, when he was thus employed out of doors, and his companions were gone to the church, as I had begun to state, the bishop was alone, busied in reading or praying in the oratory of that place, when, on a sudden, as he afterwards said, he heard the voice of persons singing most sweetly and rejoicing, and appearing to descend to the earth from heaven. Which voice he said he first heard coming from the south-east, that is, from the highest quarter of the east, and that afterwards it gradually drew near him, till it came to the roof of the oratory where the bishop was, and entering therein, filled the same and all round about it. He listened attentively to what he heard, and after about half an hour, perceived

[1] Eccles. iii. 5.

[2] See Acta SS. Mart. i. 312, where may be seen collected the little that is known or has been conjectured respecting this individual.

[3] Her history is minutely related at § 309, seq.

[4] It was one of the fundamental principles of the earlier monasticism, that the brethren should daily labour with their own hands. See Martene de Antiq. Monachorum Ritibus, lib. i. cap. 6.

the same song of joy to ascend from the roof of the said oratory, and to return to heaven the same way it came, with inexpressible sweetness. When he had stood some time astonished, and seriously revolving in his mind what these things might be, the bishop opened the window of the oratory, and making a noise with his hand, as he often had been wont to do, ordered him to come in to him. He accordingly went hastily in, and the bishop said to him, "Hasten to the church, and cause these seven brethren to come hither, and do you come along with them." When they were come, he first admonished them to preserve the virtue of love and peace among themselves, and towards all others; and indefatigably to practise the rules of regular discipline, which they had either been taught by him, or seen him observe, or had noticed in the words or actions of the former fathers. Then he added, that the day of his death was at hand; for, said he, "that loving guest, who was wont to visit our brethren, has vouchsafed to come to me also this day, and to call me out of this world. Return, therefore, to the church, and speak to the brethren, that they in their prayers recommend my departure to our Lord; and that they be careful to provide beforehand for their own, the hour whereof is uncertain, by watching, prayer, and good works."

§ 262. When he had spoken thus much and more, and they, having received his blessing, had gone away in much sorrow, he who had heard the heavenly song returned alone, and prostrating himself on the ground, said, "I beseech you, father, may I be permitted to ask a question?" "Ask what you will," answered the bishop. Then he added, "I entreat you to tell me what song of joy was that which I heard of beings descending upon this oratory, and after some time returning to heaven?" The bishop answered, "If you heard the singing, and know of the coming of the heavenly company, I command you, in the name of our Lord, that you do not tell the same to any one before my death. They truly were angelic spirits, who came to call me to my heavenly reward, which I have always loved and longed after; and they promised that they would return seven days hence, and take me away with them." Which was accordingly fulfilled, as had been said to him; for being immediately seized with a languishing distemper, and the same daily increasing, on the seventh day, as had been promised to him, when he had fortified himself for death by receiving the Body and Blood of our Lord, his soul being delivered from the prison of the body, the angels, as may justly be believed, attending him, he departed to the joys of heaven.

§ 263. It is no wonder that he joyfully beheld the day of his death, or rather the day of our Lord, which he had always carefully expected till it came; for notwithstanding his many merits of continence, humility, teaching, prayers, voluntary poverty, and other virtues, he was so full of the fear of God, so mindful of his last end in all his actions, that (as I was informed by one of the brethren who instructed me in the Scriptures, and who had been bred in his monastery, and under his direction, whose name was Trumberct) if it happened that there blew a stronger gust of wind than usual

when he was reading or doing any other thing, he immediately called upon God for mercy, and begged it might be extended to all mankind. If the wind grew stronger, he closed his book, and prostrating himself on the ground, prayed still more earnestly. But, if it proved a violent storm of wind or rain, or else that the earth and air were terrified with thunder and lightning, he would repair to the church, and devote himself to earnest prayers and the repeating of psalms till the weather became calm. Being asked by his followers why he did so, he answered, "Have not you read—'The[1] Lord also thundered from the heavens, and the Highest gave forth his voice. Yea, he sent out his arrows and scattered them; and he multiplied lightnings, and discomfited them'? For the Lord moves the air, raises the winds, darts lightning, and thunders from heaven, to excite the inhabitants of the earth to fear Him; to put them in mind of the future judgment; to dispel their pride, and vanquish their boldness, by bringing into their thoughts that dreadful time, when, the heavens and the earth being in a flame, He will come in the clouds, with great power and majesty, to judge the quick and the dead. Wherefore," said he, "it behoves us to answer his heavenly admonition with due fear and love; that, as often as He lifts his hand through the trembling sky, as it were to strike, but does not yet let it fall, we may immediately implore his mercy; and searching the recesses of our hearts, and cleansing away the rubbish of our vices, we may carefully behave ourselves so as never to be struck."

§ 264. With this revelation and account of the aforesaid brother, concerning the death of this prelate, agrees also the discourse of the most reverend father Ecgberct, above spoken[2] of, who long led a monastic life with the same Ceadda, when both were youths, in Ireland, praying, observing continence, and meditating on the holy Scriptures. But when he afterwards returned into his own country, the other continued in a strange country for our Lord's sake till the end of his life. A long time after, one named Hygbald, a most holy and continent man, who was an abbat in the province of Lindissi, came out of Britain to visit him, and whilst these holy men (as became them) were discoursing of the life of the former fathers, and rejoicing to imitate the same, mention was made of the most reverend prelate, Ceadda; whereupon Ecgberct said, "I know a man in this island, still in the flesh, who, when that prelate passed out of this world, saw the soul of his brother Cedd, with a company of angels, descending from heaven, who, having taken his soul along with them, returned thither again." Whether he said this of himself, or some other, we do not certainly know; but the same being said by so great a man, there can be no doubt of the truth thereof.

§ 265. Ceadda died on the sixth of the nones of March, [Mar. 2, A.D. 672,] and was first buried near St. Mary's church, but afterwards, when the church of the most holy prince of the apostles Peter, was built there, his bones were translated into it. In both which places, as a testimony of his virtue, frequent miraculous

[1] Ps. xviii. 15, 16.

[2] See §§ 241, 242.

cures are wont to be wrought. And of late, a certain distracted person, who had been wandering about everywhere, arrived there in the evening, unknown or unregarded by the keepers of the place, and having rested there all the night, went out in his perfect senses the next morning, to the surprise and delight of all; thus showing that a cure had been performed on him through the goodness of God. The place of the sepulchre is a wooden monument, made like a little house, covered, having a hole in the wall, through which those that go thither for devotion usually put in their hand and take out some of the dust, which they put into water and give to sick cattle or men to taste, upon which they are presently eased of their infirmity, and restored to health. In his place, Theodore ordained Uynfrid, a good and modest man, to preside, as his predecessors had done, over the bishoprics of the province of the Mercians, the Midland Angles, and the Lindisfari, of all which, Uulfhere, who was still living, was king. Uynfrid was one of the clergy of the prelate whom he had succeeded, and had for a considerable time filled the office of deacon under him.

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CHAP. IV. [A.D. 667.]—BISHOP COLMAN, HAVING LEFT BRITAIN, BUILT TWO MONASTERIES IN SCOTLAND; THE ONE FOR THE SCOTS, THE OTHER FOR THE ENGLISH WHOM HE HAD TAKEN ALONG WITH HIM.

§ 266. In the meantime, [A.D. 667,] Colman, who was a bishop from Scotland, departing[1] from Britain, took along with him all the Scots he had assembled in the isle of Lindisfarne, and also about thirty men of the English nation, who had been all instructed in the monastic life; and leaving some brethren in his church, he repaired first to the isle of Hii, whence he had been sent to preach the word of God to the English nation. Afterwards he retired to a certain small island, which is to the west of Ireland, and at some distance from its coast, called in the language of the Scots, Inisboufinde,[2] that is, "the Island of the White Heifer." Arriving there, he built a monastery, and placed in it the monks he had brought from both nations; who, when they could not agree among themselves,—by reason that the Scots, in the summer season, when the harvest was to be brought in, leaving the monastery, wandered about through places with which they were acquainted, but returned again the next winter, and desired to use in common what the English had provided;—Colman sought to find a remedy for this dissension, and travelling about far and near, he found a place in the island of Ireland fit to build a monastery, which, in the language of the Scots, is called Mageo,[3] and he bought a small part of it of the earl to whose property it belonged, to build his monastery thereon; this condition being added, that the monks residing there

[1] See § 236.

[2] A small island off the coast of Connaught. See Ussher's Antiq. pp. 431, 499; Camd. Brit. col. 1380.

[3] Formerly a bishop's see, of which the last prelate was Eugenius Mac Brenoan; it is now annexed to the bishopric of Tuam. See Ussher, p. 499, who gives several extracts from the ancient Irish Annals respecting this monastery; also Camd. Brit. col. 1381.

should pray to our Lord for him who let them have the place. Then immediately building a monastery, with the assistance of the earl and all the neighbours, he placed the English there, leaving the Scots in the aforesaid island. This monastery is to this day possessed by English inhabitants; being the same that, grown up from a small beginning to be very large, is generally called Muigeo; and as all things have long since been brought under a better method, it contains an excellent society of monks, who are gathered there from the province of the English, and live by the labour of their hands, after the example of the venerable fathers, under a rule and a canonical abbat, in much continency and singleness of life.

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CHAP. V. [A.D. 670—673.]—OF THE DEATH OF THE KINGS OSUIU AND ECGBERCT, AND OF THE SYNOD HELD AT THE PLACE CALLED HERUTFORD, IN WHICH ARCHBISHOP THEODORE PRESIDED.

§ 267. IN the year of the Incarnation of our Lord 670, being the second year after Theodore arrived in Britain, Osuiu, king of the Northumbrians, fell sick, and died, in the fifty-eighth year of his age. He at that time bore so great affection to the Roman and apostolical institution, that, had he recovered of his sickness, he had designed to go to Rome, and there to end his days at the holy places, having entreated bishop Uilfrid, by the promise of a considerable donation in money, to conduct him on his journey. He died on the fifteenth of the kalends of March, [15th Feb.] leaving his son Ecgfrid[1] his successor in the kingdom. In the third year of his reign, Theodore assembled a synod of bishops, and many other teachers[2] of the church, who loved and were acquainted with the canonical statutes of the fathers. When they were met together, he began, as became a prelate, to enjoin the observance of such things as were agreeable to the unity and the peace of the church. The purport of which synodical proceedings is as follows:—

§ 268. [A.D. 673.] "In the name of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who reigns for ever and for ever, and governs his church, it was thought meet that we should assemble, according to the custom of the venerable canons, to treat about the necessary affairs of the church. We met on the 24th day of September, the first indiction,[3] at a place called Herutford,[4] myself, Theodore, the unworthy bishop of the see of Canterbury, sent from the apostolic

[1] He was born in 645, and died 20th May, 685. See § 309, 340. He did not attain to the dignity of Bretwalda, which his father had enjoyed.

[2] Concerning these individuals, see Smith's Appendix, No. xvii. p. 746, "De Magistris Ecclesiæ."

[3] It has been conjectured by Baronius, (A.D. 672, §§ 3 and 7,) Wharton, (i. 426,) and others, that the synod of Hertford was held in A.D. 672, not 673; but Pagi, A.D. 672, § 4, has satisfactorily shown that they have fallen into this error from neglecting to remark that Beda commences the calculation of his indictions from 24th September, as he himself informs us in his treatise De Temporibus, cap. 48 (ed. Giles, vi. 244). Some valuable remarks upon this subject may be found in Hardy's essay on the "Chronology of the Mediæval Historians," prefixed to the first volume of Petrie's Monumenta, p. 117.

[4] Now Hertford.

see, and our fellow-priest and most reverend brother, Bisi,[1] bishop of the East Angles; also (by his proxies) our brother and fellow-priest, Uilfrid, bishop of the nation of the Northumbrians, as also our brothers and fellow-priests, Putta, bishop of the Kentish Castle, called Rochester; Leutherius, bishop of the West Saxons, and Uynfrid, bishop of the province of the Mercians. When we were all met together, and were sat down in order, I said, 'I beseech you, most dear brothers, for the love and fear of our Redeemer, that we may all treat in common for our faith; to the end that whatsoever has been decreed and defined by the holy and reverend fathers, may be inviolably observed by all.' This and much more I spoke tending to the preservation of the charity and unity of the church; and when I had ended my introductory discourse, I asked every one of them in order, whether they consented to observe the things that had been formerly canonically decreed by the fathers? To which all our fellow-priests answered, 'It pleases us very well, and we will all most willingly observe with a cheerful mind whatever is laid down in the canons of the holy fathers.' I then produced to them the said Book of Canons,[2] and publicly showed them ten chapters in the same, which I had marked in several places, because I knew them to be of the most importance to us, and entreated that they might be most particularly received by them all.

§ 269. "Chapter I. That we all in common keep the holy day of Easter[3] on the Sunday after the fourteenth moon of the first month.

"II. That no bishop intrude into the diocese of another, but be satisfied with the government of the people committed to him.

"III. That it shall not be lawful for any bishop in any manner to trouble monasteries dedicated to God, nor to take anything forcibly from their possessions.

"IV. That the monks of themselves[4] do not remove from one place to another, that is, from monastery to monastery, unless with the consent of their own abbat; but that they continue in the obedience which they promised at the time of their conversion.

"V. That no cleric, forsaking his own bishop, shall wander about, or be anywhere entertained without letters[5] of recom-

[1] Johnson (Laws and Canons, i. 89, ed. 1850) remarks that it is strange that Bisi should here be elevated next to Theodore at the expense of Wilfrid and Putta, both of whom were his seniors in date of consecration, and that this was in violation of the eighth canon of this council.

[2] It is obvious that Theodore, so far from having framed a new code of legislation for the English church, had not even transcribed from the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon those chapters to which he wished to direct the more immediate attention of the assembled bishops.

[3] This canon was obviously directed against the Welsh and Irish, who still calculated their Easter by a rule different from that which Augustine had brought from Rome.

[4] In some of the earlier editions the text was here vitiated, reading "Episcopi Monachi," instead of "Ipsi Monachi," an error which gave rise to several theories as to the nature of an ideal ecclesiastical constitution, which placed bishops under the rule of abbots.

[5] The system of commendatory letters extended even to the apostolic times among the christian churches. See specimens in Baluz, Capit. Reg. Franc. ii. 430, 443, 716, 959; and Alcuini Opp. i. 160, 161, 162, ed. 1777.

mendation from his own prelate. But if he shall be once received, and will not return when invited, both the receiver, and the person received, be under excommunication.

"VI. That bishops and clerics, when travelling, shall be content with the hospitality that is offered them; and that it be not lawful for them to exercise any priestly function without leave of the bishop in whose diocese they are.

"VII. That a synod be assembled twice a year; but in regard that several causes obstruct the same, it was approved by all, that we should meet on the kalends of August [Aug. 1st] once a year, at the place called Clofeshoch.[1]

"VIII. That no bishop, through ambition, shall set himself before another; but that they shall all observe the time and order of their congregation.[2]

"IX. It was generally set forth, that more bishops should be made,[3] as the number of believers increased; but this matter for the present was passed over.

"X. Of marriages; that nothing be allowed but lawful wedlock; that none commit incest; no man quit his true wife, unless, as the gospel teaches, on account of fornication. And if any man shall put away his own wife, lawfully joined to him in matrimony, that he take no other, if he really wishes to be a Christian, but continue as he is, or else be reconciled to his own wife.

§ 270. "These chapters being thus treated of and defined by all, to the end that, for the future, no scandal of contention might arise from any of us, and that there should be no mistake in their publication, it was thought fit that every one of us should, by subscribing his hand, confirm all the particulars so determined. Which definitive judgment of ours I dictated to be written by Titillus our notary. Done in the month and indiction aforesaid. Whosoever, therefore, shall presume in any way to oppose or infringe this decision, confirmed by our consent, and by the subscription of our hands, according to the decrees of the canons, let him know, that he is excluded from all sacerdotal functions, and from our society. May the Divine Grace preserve us in safety, living in the unity of his holy church."

§ 271. This synod was held in the year from the incarnation of our Lord 673. In which year, Egbert, king of Kent, died in the month of July; his brother Hlothere succeeded him on the throne, which he had held eleven years and seven months. Bisi, the

[1] Camden, Somner, and Gibson think it not improbable that this is Abingdon, the older name for which, they tell us, was Seoveshou. Cliff, in Kent, is also supposed to have claims.

[2] In most MSS. the Latin is "consecrationis," not "congregationis," as I have rendered above from More's MS. which, in this instance, appears to be faulty. The canon here cited by Theodore is founded upon the lxxxvi. of the Codex Canonum Ecclesiæ Africanæ, (Labb. ii. 1099,) which gives additional authority for the correction here suggested.

[3] "There was at this time great occasion for more bishops in this nation; when, so far as appears, there were but as many bishops as there were kingdoms, save that Kent had always two, and so had the East Angles, when Bisi grew infirm, and after his death; as likewise the Northumbrians, upon the expulsion of Wilfrid."—Johnson's note, Laws and Canons, i. 93.

bishop of the East Angles, who is said to have been in the aforesaid synod, was successor to Boniface, before spoken of,[1] a man of much sanctity and religion; for when Boniface died, after having been bishop seventeen years, he was by Theodore substituted in his bishopric. Whilst he was still alive, but hindered by much sickness from administering his episcopal functions, two bishops, Aecci and Baduvini, were elected and consecrated in his place; from which time to the present that province has been wont to have two bishops.[2]

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CHAP. VI. [A.D. 674.]—HOW UYNFRID BEING DEPOSED, SAEXUULF WAS PUT INTO HIS SEE, AND EARCONUALD MADE BISHOP OF THE EAST SAXONS.

§ 272. No long time after this, Theodore, the archbishop, deservedly taking offence at some disobedience[3] of Uinfrid, bishop of the Mercians, deposed him from his bishopric when he had been possessed of it but a few years, and in his place ordained Sexuulf as bishop, who was founder and abbat of the monastery called Medeshamstedi,[4] in the country of the Gyrvii. Uinfrid, thus deposed, returned to his monastery, which is called "Ad Baruae,"[5] and there ended his life in holy conversation.

§ 273. He then also appointed Earconuald[6] bishop of the East Saxons, in the city of London, over whom at that time presided Sebbi and Sigheri, of whom mention has been made above. This Earconuald's life and conversation, as well when he was bishop as before his advancement to that dignity, is reported to have been most holy, as is even at this time testified by the signs of heavenly miracles; for to this day, his horse-litter, in which he was wont to be carried when sick, is kept by his disciples, and still continues to cure many of feverish attacks and other distempers; and not only sick persons who are laid in that litter, or close by it, are cured; but the very chips of it, when carried to the sick, are wont immediately to restore them to health.

§ 274. This man, before he was made bishop, had built two famous monasteries, the one for himself, and the other for his sister, Aedilbergae, and established them both in regular discipline of the best kind. That for himself was in the region "Sudergeona," by the river Thames, at a place called Cerotaesei,[7] that is, "the Island of Cerot;" that for his sister in the province of the East Saxons, at the place called "In Berecingum,"[8] wherein she might be a mother and nurse of women devoted to God. Having assumed the

[1] See § 209.

[2] The see thus divided, Aecci resided at Domoc or Dunwich, and Baduini continued at Elmham. The two bishoprics were reunited in the person of Adulph in 955. See Wharton, Angl. Sacr. i. 404, 405.

[3] It is highly probable that Winfrid's offence consisted in his refusal to permit his diocese of Lichfield to be subdivided, according to the suggestion of the recent council. See the ninth chapter, § 269; Wharton, Angl. Sacr. i. 426.

[4] Now Peterborough. [5] See § 259.

[6] His life and miracles, in an abridged form, written by Gotscelin, may be seen in the Acta SS. April. iii. 780; a fuller copy in the Appendix to Dugdale's History of St. Paul's.

[7] Now Chertsey, in Surrey. The chronicle of that abbey states that it was founded in the year 666. See Dugd. Monast. i. 75, ed. 1655.

[8] Now Barking, in Essex. See Dugd. Monast. i. 79.

government of that monastery, she behaved herself in all respects as became the sister of such an episcopal brother, living herself regularly, and piously, and according to rule, providing for those under her, as was also manifested by heavenly miracles.

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CHAP. VII. [A.D. 664.]—HOW IT WAS INDICATED BY A HEAVENLY LIGHT WHERE THE BODIES OF THE NUNS SHOULD BE BURIED IN THE MONASTERY OF BARKING.

§ 275. IN this monastery many miracles were wrought, which have been committed to writing by many, from those who knew them, that their memory might be preserved, and following generations edified; some whereof we have also taken care to insert in our Ecclesiastical History. When the mortality, which we have already [1] so often mentioned, ravaging all far and wide, had also seized on that part of this monastery where the men [2] resided, and they were daily hurried away to meet their God, the careful mother of the society began often to inquire in the convent of the sisters, in what part of the monastery they would have their bodies buried, and where a churchyard should be made when the same pestilence should fall upon that part of the monastery in which the assemblage of God's female servants were divided from the men, and they should be snatched away out of this world by the same destruction. Receiving no certain answer from the sisters, though she often put the question, she and all of them received a most certain answer from heaven. For one night, when the psalms of matin praise [3] were ended, and those female servants of Christ were gone out of their oratory to the tombs of the brethren who had departed this life before them, and were singing the usual praises to our Lord, on a sudden a light from heaven, like a great sheet, came down upon them all, and struck them with so much terror, that they, in consternation, left off the chant which they were singing. But that resplendent light, which seemed by comparison to exceed the sun at noon-day, soon after rising from that place, removed to the south side of the monastery, that is, to the westward of the oratory, and having continued there some time, and covered those parts in the sight of them all, withdrew itself up again to heaven, leaving conviction in the minds of all, that the same light, which was to lead or to receive the souls of those handmaidens of Christ into heaven, was intended to show the place in which their bodies were to rest,[4] and await the day of the resurrection. This light was so great, that one of the eldest of the brethren, who at the same time was in their oratory with another younger than himself, related in the morning, that the rays of light which came in at the crannies of the doors and windows, seemed to exceed the utmost brightness of daylight itself.

[1] See §§ 240, 252, &c.

[2] On these double monasteries, in which both monks and nuns resided under the government of an abbess, see Lingard's Anglo-Saxon Church, i. 212.

[3] This service, afterwards known as Matins or Lauds, is illustrated by Martene de Antiquis Monachorum Ritibus, lib. i. cap. 3.

[4] It would appear from this curious passage, that the bodies of the nuns were not usually interred in the burial-place of the monks; but that each had its own peculiar place of sepulture.

CHAP. VIII. [A.D. 664.]—HOW A LITTLE BOY, DYING IN THE SAME MONASTERY, CALLED UPON A VIRGIN THAT WAS TO FOLLOW HIM; AND HOW ANOTHER, AT THE POINT OF LEAVING HER BODY, SAW SOME SMALL PART OF THE FUTURE GLORY.

§ 276. THERE was, in the same monastery, a boy, about three years old, (not more,) called Aesica; who, by reason of his infant age, was bred up among the virgins dedicated to God, and was there that he might be cured. This child being seized by the aforesaid pestilence, when he was at the last gasp, called three times upon one of the virgins consecrated to God, calling her by her own name, as if she had been present, Eadgyd! Eadgyd! Eadgyd! and thus ending his temporal life, entered into that which is eternal. The virgin, whom he called as he was dying, was immediately seized, where she was, with the same distemper, and departing this life the same day on which she had been called, followed him that called her into the heavenly kingdom.

§ 277. Likewise, one of those same handmaids of God, being ill of the same disease, and reduced to extremity, began on a sudden, about midnight, to cry out to them that attended[1] her, desiring that they would put out the candle that was lighted there; which, when she had often repeated, and yet no one obeyed her, at last she said, "I know you think I speak this in a raving fit, but let me inform you it is not so; for of a truth I tell you, that I see this house filled with so much light, that your candle there seems to me to be wholly dark." And when even yet no one regarded what she said, or complied with her request, she added, "Let that candle burn as long as you will; but take notice, that it is not mine, for my light will come to me at the dawn of the day." Then she began to tell, that a certain man of God, who had died that same year, had appeared to her, telling her that at the break of day she should depart to the eternal light. The truth of which vision was established by the death of the girl as soon as the day appeared.

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CHAP. IX. [A.D. 676.]—OF THE SIGNS WHICH WERE SHOWN FROM HEAVEN WHEN THE MOTHER OF THAT CONGREGATION DEPARTED FROM THIS WORLD.

§ 278. WHEN Aedilburga herself, the pious mother of that holy congregation, was about to be taken out of this world, a wonderful vision appeared to one of the sisters, called Torctgyd; who, having now lived many years in that monastery, always endeavoured, in all humility and sincerity, to serve God, and took care to assist the same mother in keeping up discipline according to rule, by instructing and reproving the younger ones. Now, in order that her virtue might be perfected in affliction, according to the apostle, she was suddenly seized with a most grievous bodily distemper, under which, through the good providence of our Redeemer, she suffered very much for the space of nine years; to the end, that whatever pollution of vice remained amidst her virtues, either through igno-

[1] The monastic rules made ample provision for due attendance upon the sick brethren or sisters. See Martene de Antiq. Monac. Rit. lib. v. cap. ix. §§ 86—88.

rance or neglect, might all be eradicated by the fire of a long tribulation. This person, going out of the chamber in which she resided, one night, just at the first dawn of the day, plainly saw as it were a human body, which was brighter than the sun, wrapped up in a sheet, and lifted up on high, being taken out of the house in which the sisters used to reside. Then looking earnestly to see what it was that drew up the appearance of this glorious body which she beheld, she perceived it was drawn up as it were by cords brighter than gold, until, entering into the opened heavens, it could no longer be seen by her. Reflecting on this vision, she made no doubt that some one of that congregation would soon die, and that her soul would be lifted up to heaven by the good works which she had done, as it were by golden cords; which accordingly happened; for not many days afterwards, the mother of that society, beloved of God, was delivered out of the prison of the flesh; and her life is known to have been such that no person who knew her ought to question but that the heavenly kingdom was open to her, when she departed from this world.

§ 279. There was also, in the same monastery, a certain nun, of noble worldly origin, and much nobler in the love of the world to come; who had, for many years, been so disabled in all her body, that she could not move a single limb. Being informed that the venerable abbess's body was carried into[1] the church, till it should be committed to the tomb, she desired to be carried thither, and to be bowed down towards it, after the manner of one praying; which being done, she spoke to her as if she had been living, and entreated her that she would obtain of the mercy of our compassionate Creator, that she might be delivered from such great and lasting pains. Nor was it long before her prayer was heard: for being taken out of the flesh twelve days after, she exchanged her temporal afflictions for an eternal reward.

§ 280. Three years after the death of this lady, the abovementioned servant of Christ, Torctgyd, was so far spent with the disease before mentioned, that her bones would scarcely hang together; and at last, when the time of her dissolution was at hand, she not only lost the use of her other limbs, but also of her tongue; which having continued three days and as many nights, she was, on a sudden, relieved by a spiritual vision: she opened her mouth and eyes, and looking up to heaven, began thus to address the vision which she saw: "Your coming is very acceptable to me, and you are welcome!" Having so said, she was silent awhile, as it were waiting for the answer of the person whom she saw and to whom she spoke; then, as if slightly displeased, she said, "I cannot bear this joyfully;" then pausing awhile, she said the third time, "If it cannot by any means be to-day, I beg the delay may not be long;" and again holding her peace a short while, as before she concluded thus: "If it be positively so decreed, and the rese-

[1] It was by no means an uncommon occurrence for persons on the near approach of death to be carried into the church, and to expire near the altar. This was the case with Benedict, the founder of the Benedictine order, and with his disciple, St Maur.

lution cannot be altered, I beg that it may be no longer deferred than this next night." Having so said, and being asked by those who were seated round about her to whom she had been talking, she said, "With my most dear mother, Aedilburge;" by which they understood, that she was come to acquaint her that the time of her departure was at hand; for, as she had desired, after one day and night, she was delivered from the bonds and infirmity of the flesh, and entered the joys of eternal salvation.

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CHAP. X. [A.D. 676.]—HOW A BLIND WOMAN, PRAYING IN THE BURIAL-PLACE OF THAT MONASTERY, WAS RESTORED TO HER SIGHT.

§ 281. HILDILID, a devout handmaid of God, succeeded Aedilburge in the office of abbess, and presided over that monastery many years, till she was of an extreme old age, with exemplary conduct, in the observance of regular discipline, and in the care of providing all things necessary for the public use. The narrowness of the place where the monastery is built led her to think that the bones of the male and female servants of Christ, which had been there buried, should be taken up, and all translated into the church of the blessed mother of God, and interred in one place: whoever wishes to read it, may find in the book from which we have gathered these things, how often a brightness of heavenly light was seen there, and a fragrance of wonderful odour smelled, and what other miracles were wrought.

§ 282. However, I think it by no means fit to pass over the miraculous cure, which the same book informs us was wrought in the churchyard of the said congregation devoted to God. There lived in that neighbourhood a certain earl, whose wife was seized with a sudden dimness in her eyes, which, increasing, at length became so oppressive, that she could not see the least glimpse of light: having continued some time in the total darkness of blindness, on a sudden she bethought herself that she might possibly recover her lost sight, if she were carried to the monastery of the nuns, and there were to pray for the same, at the relics of the saints. Nor did she lose any time in performing what she had thought of: for being conducted by her maids to the monastery, which was very near, and professing that she had perfect faith that she should be there healed, she was led into the burial-place, and having long prayed there on her knees, she did not fail to be heard; for as she rose from prayer, before she went out of the place, she received the gift of sight which she had desired; and whereas she had been led thither by her servants, she now returned home joyfully without help, walking freely upon her feet; as if she had lost her bodily sight to no other end than that she might make it appear by her cure how great light the saints of Christ enjoyed in heaven, and how great was the power of their virtue.

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CHAP. XI. [A.D. 694.]—HOW SEBBI, KING OF THE SAME PROVINCE, ENDS HIS LIFE IN MONASTIC CONVERSATION.

§ 283. AT that time, as the same little book informs us, Sebbi,[1] a devout man, of whom mention has been made above,[2] governed the kingdom of the East Saxons. He was much addicted to religious actions, frequent prayers, and the fruits of pious alms; preferring a private and monastic life to all the wealth and honours of his kingdom; which sort of life he would also long before have undertaken, leaving his kingdom, had not his wife obstinately refused to be divorced from him; for which reason many were of opinion, and often said so, that a person of such a disposition ought rather to have been ordained a bishop than a king. When the soldier of the heavenly kingdom had been thirty years a king, he fell into a violent sickness, of which he died, and he admonished his wife, that they should then at least jointly devote themselves to the service of God, since they could no longer enjoy, or rather serve, the world. Having with much difficulty obtained this of her, he repaired to Ualdheri,[3] bishop of the city of London, who had succeeded Erconuald, and with his blessing received the religious habit, which he had long desired. He also carried to him a considerable sum of money, to be given to the poor, reserving nothing whatever to himself, but rather coveting to remain poor in spirit, for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.

§ 284. When the aforesaid disease increased upon him, and he perceived that the day of his death was drawing near, being a man of a royal disposition, he began to apprehend lest, when under pain, and at the approach of death, he might be guilty of anything unworthy of his person, either by words, or by some motion of his limbs. Wherefore, calling to him the aforesaid bishop of London, in which city he then was, he entreated him that none might be present at his death, besides the bishop himself, and two of his attendants. The bishop having promised that he would most willingly perform the same, not long after the same man of God composed his limbs to sleep, and saw a comforting vision, which took from him all anxiety for the aforesaid uneasiness; and, moreover, showed him on what day he was to depart this life. For, as he afterwards related, he saw three men in bright garments come to him; one of whom sat down before his bed, whilst his companions, who had come with him, stood and inquired about the state of the sick man they came to see: he who was sitting in front of the bed said, that his soul should depart from his body without any pain, and with a great splendour of light; and declared that he should die the third day after. Both these particulars happened,

[1] His life, compiled from Beda, Malmesbury, and Alford, may be found in the Acta SS. August. vi. 516. He began to reign in 665, and died in 694. See Pagi, A.D. 672, § 7. Stowe and Weever speak of his tomb as remaining in their days in St. Paul's cathedral.

[2] See § 230.

[3] The dates of the death of Erconwald and the accession of Ualdheri to the see of London are uncertain. It is obvious that the death of the former of these prelates was anterior to that of Sebbi, which occurred A.D. 694, early in which year, or in 693, we may fix the commencement of Ualdheri's pontificate.

as he had been informed by the vision ; for on the third day after, at the end of the ninth hour, he suddenly fell, as it were, into a gentle slumber, and breathed out his soul without any sense of pain.

§ 285. A stone coffin having been provided for burying his body, when they came to lay it in the same, they found that it was a palm's length longer than the coffin. Hereupon they hewed away the stone, as well as they were able, and made the coffin about two fingers longer ; but neither would it then contain the body. Under this difficulty of entombing him, they had thoughts either to get another coffin, or else to shorten the body, by bending it at the knees, if they could, until the coffin would receive it. But a wonderful event, caused by providence, prevented the execution of both of those designs ; for on a sudden, in the presence of the bishop, and Sighard, the son of the king who had turned monk, and who reigned after him jointly with his brother Suefred, and of a considerable number of men, that same coffin was found to answer the length of the body, insomuch that even a pillow might be put in at the head ; and at the feet the coffin was four fingers longer than the body. He was buried in the church of the blessed Apostle of the Gentiles, by whose instructions he had learned to hope for heavenly things.

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CHAP. XII. [A.D. 673—685.]—HOW HAEDDI SUCCEEDS LEUTHERIUS IN THE BISHOPRIC OF THE WEST SAXONS ; CUICHELM SUCCEEDS PUTTA IN THAT OF THE CHURCH OF ROCHESTER, AND IS HIMSELF SUCCEEDED BY GEFMUND ; AND WHO WERE THEN BISHOPS OF THE NORTHUMBRIANS.

§ 286. LEUTHERIUS was the fourth[1] bishop of the West Saxons ; for Birinus was the first, Agilberct the second, and Uini the third. When Coinualch,[2] in whose reign the said Leutherius was made bishop, died, his under-rulers[3] took upon them the government of the nation, and dividing it among themselves, held it about ten years ;[4] and during their rule he died, and Haeddi[5] succeeded him in the bishopric, having been consecrated by Theodore in the city of London. During his prelacy, Caedualla,[6] having subdued and removed those sub-rulers, took upon himself the government. When he had reigned two years, and whilst the same bishop still governed the church, he quitted his sovereignty for the love of the

[1] Beda has already traced the history of the bishops of this see up to the time of Leutherius, § 167.

[2] It seems highly probable, from the reasons advanced by Pagi, A.D. 673, § 13, that Coinwalch died between the months of February and July in that year. The Saxon Chronicle, however, places it in 672.

[3] These subreguli were Escwin and Kentwin. The latter was the younger brother of the deceased monarch ; the former descended from Ceolwulf, the brother to the grandfather of Coinwalch.

[4] The succession of the kings of Wessex seems to have been as follows. On the death of Coinwalch, in 673, his widow, Sexburga, reigned until the beginning of 675. Escwin then occupied the throne until the end of 676, when he was succeeded by Kentwin, who died in 685.

[5] Heddi succeeded Leutherius in the see of Winchester in 676, and died there early in the reign of Osred, king of Northumbria, that is, in 705. See § 409.

[6] He began to reign in 685, and resigned his crown in 688.

heavenly kingdom, and, going away to Rome, ended his days there, as shall be said more fully hereafter.[1]

§ 287. In the year of our Lord's incarnation 676,[2] when Aedilred, king of the Mercians, ravaged Kent with a cruel army, and polluted churches and monasteries, without regard to religion, or the fear of God, he destroyed the city of Rochester in the common ruin. Putta, who was bishop, was absent at that time, but when he understood that his church was ravaged, and all things taken away, he went to Sexuulf, bishop of the Mercians, and having received of him a certain church, and a small parcel of land, ended his days there in peace; in no way endeavouring to restore his bishopric, because (as has been said above)[3] he was more industrious in spiritual than in worldly affairs; serving God only in that church, and going wherever he was desired, to teach church music. Theodore consecrated Cuichelm as bishop in the city of Rochester in his stead; but he, not long after, departing from his bishopric for want of necessaries, and withdrawing to other parts, Gebmund was substituted as bishop in his place.

§ 288. In the year of our Lord's incarnation 678,[4] which is the eighth of the reign of Ecgfrid, in the month of August, appeared a star, called a comet, which continued for three months, rising in the morning, and darting out, as it were, a pillar of radiant flame. The same year a dissension[5] broke out between king Ecgfrid and the most reverend prelate, Uilfrid, who was driven from his see, and two bishops substituted in his stead, to preside over the nation of the Northumbrians; namely, Bosa, to preside over the province of the Deiri; and Eata over that of the Bernicians; the former having his see in the city of York, the latter in the church of Hagustald, or else in that of Lindisfarne; both of them promoted to the episcopal dignity from a college of monks. With them also was Eadhaed, ordained bishop in the province of the Lindisfari, which king Ecgfrid had very recently subdued, having overcome and vanquished in battle Uulfhere; and this was the first bishop of its own which that province had; the second was Aediluini; the third Eadgar; the fourth Cyniberct, who is there at present. Before Eadhaed, Sexuulf was bishop as well of that province as of the Mercians and Midland Angles; so that, when expelled from Lindissi, he continued in the government of those provinces. Eadhaed, Bosa, and Eata, were ordained at York by archbishop Theodore;[6] who also, three years after the departure of Uilfrid,

[1] See § 372.

[2] Some of the earlier editions have read, erroneously, 677. [3] See § 258.

[4] This is the reading of the best MSS.; those of inferior authority hesitating between A.D. 677 and 679; and it may possibly be correct: yet Pagi, A.D. 677, §§ 9—13, advances very strong arguments to prove that the text is here corrupt, and that the true date is 677. Instead of giving the date of the Incarnation, the Saxon version here substitutes the following passage: "About two years afterwards, Aethelheard plundered Kent, that is, in the ninth year of the reign of king Ecgfrith." Yet this does not solve the difficulty; for Kent was ravaged in 676, and the ninth regnal year of Ecgfrith cannot be made to synchronise with that date. The Saxon Chronicle agrees with 678; Florence with 677.

[5] Here the life of Wilfrid by Eddius may be consulted.

[6] See a sketch of the ecclesiastical partition of Wilfrid's diocese in Wharton, Angl. Sacr. i. 695, and Collier, i. 105.

added two bishops to their number; Tunberct, in the church of Hagustald, Eata still continuing in that of Lindisfarne; and Trumuini in the province of the Picts, which at that time was subject to the Angles. Eadhaed returning from Lindissi, because Aedilred had recovered that province, was placed by him over the church of Ripon.

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CHAP. XIII. [A.D. 678—685.]—HOW BISHOP UILFRID CONVERTS THE PROVINCE OF THE SOUTH SAXONS TO CHRIST.

§ 289. BEING expelled[1] from his bishopric, and having for a long time travelled in several parts, Uilfrid went to Rome. He afterwards returned to Britain; and though he could not, by reason of the enmity of the aforesaid king, be received into his own country or diocese, yet he could not be restrained from the ministry of preaching the gospel; for, turning aside into the province of the South Saxons,—which extends behind Kent on the west and south, as far as the West Saxons, and contains land of 7,000 families, who at that time were still pagans,—he administered to them the word of faith, and the washing of salvation. Aedilualch, king of that nation, had been, not long before,[2] baptized in the province of the Mercians, in the presence and by the persuasion of king Uulfhere, by whom also he had been received as his son when he came up from the font, and who in token of such adoption gave him two provinces, namely, the Isle of Wight, and the province of the Meanvari,[3] in the nation of the West Saxons. The bishop, therefore, with the king's consent, or rather to his great satisfaction, washed in the holy font the principal generals and soldiers of that country; and the priests, Eappa, and Padda, and Burghelm, and Oiddi, either then, or afterwards, baptized the rest of the people. The queen, whose name was Eabae, had been baptized in her own province, that of the Huicci. She was the daughter of Eanfrid, the brother of Eanheri, who were both Christians, as were their people; but all the province of the South Saxons were ignorant of the name and faith of God. There was among them a certain monk of the Scottish nation, whose name was Dicul,[4] who had a very small monastery, at the place called Bosanhamm,[5] encompassed with the sea and woods, and in it five or six brethren, who served our Lord in poverty and humility; but none of the natives cared either to follow their course of life, or hear their preaching.

[1] As to the cause of this breach between Wilfrid and Ecgfrid, consult the narrative of Eddius.

[2] Certainly before A.D. 675, when Uulfheri, by whose advice he embraced Christianity, died, (see the chronological recapitulation, § 452,) and perhaps in 661, to which year his conversion is assigned by the Saxon Chronicle, Florence of Worcester, and Henry of Huntingdon.

[3] Traces of this tribe remain in the names of East Meon, West Meon, Meon Stoke, and elsewhere in Hampsihre. Camd. Brit. coll. 145, 146.

[4] See § 207. This Dicul, or Dicuil, was possibly the Irish monk who wrote a treatise "De Mensura Orbis Terræ," published by Walckenaer in 1807, and again by Letronne in 1814. An abstract of this work, and an account of the author, may be seen in Wright's Biographia Brit. Lit., Saxon Period, p. 372.

[5] See Camd. Brit. col. 197. From this monastery, and Selsey mentioned below, arose the see of Chichester.

§ 290. But bishop Uilfrid, by preaching to that nation, not only delivered them from the misery of perpetual damnation, but also from an inexpressible calamity of temporal death; for no rain had fallen in that place for three years before his arrival, whereupon a dreadful famine ensued, which cruelly destroyed the people. In short, it is reported, that very often, forty or fifty men, being spent with want, would go together to some precipice, or to the sea-shore, and there, hand in hand, miserably perish by the fall, or be swallowed up by the waves. But on the very day on which that nation received the baptism of faith, there fell a soft but plentiful rain; the earth revived again, and the verdure being restored to the fields, the season was pleasant and fruitful. Thus the former superstition being rejected, and idolatry renounced, the hearts and flesh of all rejoiced in the living God, and became convinced that He who is the true God had, through his heavenly grace, enriched them with inward and outward blessings. For the bishop, when he came into the province, and found there so great misery from famine, taught them to get their food by fishing; for their sea and rivers abounded with fish, but the people had no skill to take them, except eels alone. The bishop's men having gathered eel-nets everywhere, cast them into the sea, and by the blessing of God immediately took three hundred fishes of several sorts, which, being divided into three parts, they gave one hundred to the poor, one hundred to those from whom they had received the nets, and kept one hundred for their own use. By this act of kindness the bishop gained the affections of them all, and they began more readily at his preaching to hope for heavenly goods, seeing that by his help they had received those which are temporal.

§ 291. At this time, king Aedilualch gave to the most reverend prelate, Uilfrid, land for eighty-seven families, to maintain his company who were in banishment, which place is called "Selaeseu," that is, the Island of the Sea-Calf. That place is encompassed by the sea on all sides, except on the west, where is an entrance about the cast of a sling in width; which sort of place is by the Latins called a peninsula, by the Greeks, a chersonesus. Bishop Uilfrid, having this place given him, founded therein a monastery, which his successors possess to this day, and established a regular course of life, chiefly of the brethren whom he had brought with him; for he both in word and deed performed the duties of a bishop in those parts during the space of five years, until the death of king Ecgfrid. And forasmuch as the aforesaid king, together with the said place, gave him all the goods that were therein, with the lands and men, he instructed them in the faith of Christ, and washed them all in the water of baptism. Among whom were two hundred and fifty men and women slaves, all of whom he, by baptism, not only rescued from the servitude of the devil, but gave them their bodily liberty also, and freed them from the yoke of human servitude.

CHAP. XIV. [A.D. 679.]—HOW A PESTILENTIAL MORTALITY CEASED THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF KING OSUALD.[1]

§ 292. IN this monastery, at that time, certain gifts of the heavenly grace are said to have been specially shown forth; for the tyranny of the devil having been recently exploded, the faith of Christ began to prevail therein. Of which number I have thought it proper to perpetuate the memory of one which the most reverend bishop Acca was wont very frequently to relate to me, affirming it had been told to him by most credible brethren of the same monastery. About the same time that this province of the South Saxons embraced the name of Christ, a grievous mortality ran through many provinces of Britain; which, also, by the divine dispensation, reached to the aforesaid monastery, then governed by the most religious priest of Christ, Eappa; and many, as well of those who had come thither with the bishop, as also of those of the same province of the South Saxons that had been lately called to the faith, were in many places snatched away out of this world. The brethren, in consequence, thought fit to keep a fast of three days, and humbly to implore the divine goodness, that it would vouchsafe to extend mercy to them, either by delivering from death those that were in danger by the disease, or by saving those who had departed this life from eternal damnation.

§ 293. There was at that time in the same monastery, a little boy, of the Saxon nation, lately called to the faith, who had been seized with the same disorder, and had long kept his bed. On the second day of the said fasting and praying, it happened that the said boy was, about the second hour of the day, left alone in the place where he lay sick, and through the divine disposition, the most blessed princes of the apostles vouchsafed to appear to him; for he was a lad of an extraordinarily mild and gentle disposition, and with sincere devotion observed the mysteries of the faith which he had received. The apostles therefore, saluting him with most affectionate words, said, "My child, do not fear death, about which you are so uneasy; for we will this day conduct you to the heavenly kingdom; but you are first to wait till the masses are said, that, having received the viaticum of the Body and Blood of our Lord, and being so freed from sickness and death, you may be carried up to the everlasting joys in heaven.

§ 294. "Call therefore to you the priest, Eappa, and tell him, that the Lord has heard your prayers, and has favourably accepted of your fast and devotion, and not one more shall henceforth die of this plague, either in the monastery or its adjacent possessions; but that all your people who anywhere labour under this distemper,

[1] Here the MSS. vary considerably in the numbers which they prefix to this and the following chapters. Bishop More's MS. omits the title of this and the following chapter. In one of the two Cottonian MSS. chap. xiv. is totally omitted, and in the margin of this leaf an old hand has written, "Hic deest folium." Hence has arisen a surmise that this present account of Oswald's miracles is an interpolation; a charge from which it is freed by its existence in More's MS. and in one of those in the Cottonian Library.

shall be eased of their pain, and restored to their former health, except you alone, who are this day to be delivered by death, and to be carried into heaven, to the vision of our Lord Christ, whom you have faithfully served. This favour the divine mercy has vouchsafed to grant you, through the intercession of the religious and dear servant of God, king Osuald, who formerly ruled over the nation of the Northumbrians with the authority of a temporal king, and such devotion of christian piety as leads to the heavenly kingdom; for this very day that king was killed in war by the infidels, and forthwith taken up to the everlasting joys of souls in heaven, and associated among the number of the elect. Let them look in their books, wherein the departure of the dead is set down, and they will find that he was, this day, as we have said, taken out of this world. Let them, therefore, celebrate masses in all the oratories of this monastery, either in thanksgiving for that their prayers have been heard, or else in memory of the aforesaid king Osuald, who once governed their nation; and therefore he humbly offered up his prayers to our Lord for them, as for strangers of his nation; and let all the brethren, assembling in the church, communicate in the heavenly sacrifices, and so let them cease from fasting, and refresh themselves with food."

§ 295. The boy called the priest, and repeated all these words to him; the priest particularly inquired after the habit and form of the men that had appeared to him. He answered, "Their habits were very noble, and their countenances most pleasant and beautiful, such as I had never seen before, nor did I think there could be any men so graceful and comely. One of them indeed was shorn like a clerk, the other had a long beard; and they said that one of them was called Peter, the other Paul; and that both of them were the servants of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, sent by Him from heaven to protect our monastery." The priest believed what the boy said, and going thence immediately, looked in his Chronicle, and found that king Osuald had been killed on that very day. He then called the brethren, ordered dinner to be provided, masses to be said, and that all of them should communicate as usual; causing also a portion of the same sacrifice of the Lord's oblation to be carried to the sick boy.

§ 296. Soon after this had been done, the boy died, on that same day; and by his death proved that the words which he had heard from the apostles of God were true. A further testimony of the truth of his words was, that no person besides himself, belonging to the same monastery, died at that time. By which vision, many that heard of it were wonderfully excited to implore the divine mercy in adversity, and to adopt the wholesome remedy of fasting. From that time, the day of the nativity of that king and soldier of Christ began to be yearly honoured with the celebration of masses, not only in that monastery, but also in many other places.

CHAP. XV. [A.D. 685.]—HOW KING CAEDUALLA, HAVING SLAIN AEDILUALCH, KING OF THE GEUISSI, WASTED THAT PROVINCE WITH CRUEL SLAUGHTER AND PILLAGE.

§ 297. IN the meantime, Caedualla, a daring young man, of the royal race[1] of the Geuissi, who had been banished from his country, came with an army, slew Aedilualch, and wasted that province with much slaughter and plundering; but he was soon expelled by Berchthun and Andhun, the king's commanders, who afterwards held the government of that province. The first of them was afterwards killed by the same Caedualla, when he was king of the Geuissi, and the province was reduced under a stricter rule: Ini,[2] likewise, who reigned after Caedualla, kept that country under the like servitude for several years; for which reason, during all that time, they had no bishop of their own; but their first bishop, Uilfrid, having been recalled home, they were subject to the bishop of the Geuissi, that is, of the West Saxons, in the city of Winchester.

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CHAP. XVI. [A.D. 686.]—HOW THE ISLE OF WIGHT RECEIVED CHRISTIAN INHABITANTS, AND HOW TWO ROYAL YOUTHS OF THAT ISLAND WERE KILLED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THEY HAD RECEIVED BAPTISM.

§ 298. AFTER Caedualla had possessed himself of the kingdom of the Geuissi, he also took the Isle of Wight, which till then was entirely devoted to idolatry, and by cruel slaughter endeavoured to exterminate all the inhabitants thereof, and to place in their stead people from his own province; having bound himself by a vow, though he was not yet, as is reported, regenerated in Christ, that he would give the fourth part of the land, and of the booty, to our Lord, if he took the island. This he performed by giving the same for our Lord to the use of bishop Uilfrid, who happened at the time to have accidentally come thither out of his own nation. The measure of that island, according to the computation of the Angles, is of twelve hundred families, and accordingly the bishop had given to him land for three hundred families. The part which he received, he committed to one of his clerks called Bernuini, who was his sister's son, assigning him a priest, whose name was Hiddila, who might administer the word and baptism of life to all that would be saved.

§ 299. Here I think it ought not to be omitted that the first fruits of the natives of that island who, by believing, were saved, were two royal youths, brothers to Arvald, king of the island, who were crowned by the particular grace of God. For when the enemy approached, they made their escape out of the island, and passed over into the neighbouring province of the Jutes; where, being conducted to the place called "At the Stone,"[3] as they thought to be concealed from the victorious king, they were betrayed and ordered to be killed. This being made known to a certain abbat and priest, whose name was Cyniberct, who had a

[1] He was the son of Cenbyrht, who died in 661, and of the race of Ceawlin of Wessex. The narrative of Eddius should be here compared with Beda.

[2] He began his reign in 688, and resigned the crown in 725. See V. vii. § 373.

[3] Now Stoneham, in Hampshire. See Camd. Brit. p. 138.

monastery not far from thence, at a place called Hreutford,[1] that is, the "Ford of Reeds," he came to the king, who then lay privately in those parts, to be cured of the wounds which he had received whilst he was fighting in the Isle of Wight, and begged of him, that if the youths must inevitably be slain, he might be allowed first to instruct them in the mysteries of the christian faith. The king consented, and the bishop having taught them the word of truth, and cleansed them in the font of the Saviour, gave them the assurance of entering the eternal kingdom. Then the executioner being at hand, they joyfully underwent the temporal death, through which they did not doubt they were to pass to the life of the soul, which is everlasting. Thus, after all the provinces of Britain had embraced the faith of Christ, the Isle of Wight also received the same; yet being under the affliction of eternal subjection, no man there received the degree of the ministry, or the see of a bishop, before Daniel, who is now bishop of the West Saxons.

§ 300. The island is situated opposite the division between the South Saxons and the Geuissi, being separated from it by a sea, three miles over, which is called Solvente. In this sea, the two tides of the ocean, which flow round Britain from the immense northern ocean, daily meet and oppose one another beyond the mouth of the river Homelea,[2] which runs into that narrow sea, from the lands of the Jutes, which belong to the country of the Geuissi; after this meeting and struggling together of the two seas, they return into the ocean from whence they came.

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### Chap. XVII. [A.D. 680.]—Of the Synod held in the plain of Haethfeld, where Archbishop Theodore presided.

§ 301. About this time, Theodore being informed that the faith of the church at Constantinople was much perplexed by the heresy of Eutyches, and desiring to preserve the churches of the Angles, over which he presided, free from that infection, an[3] assembly of many venerable priests and doctors was convened, at which he diligently inquired into the doctrines of each, and found they all unanimously agreed in the catholic faith. This he took care to have committed to writing by the authority of the synod, as a memorial, and for the instruction of succeeding generations; the beginning of which instrument is as follows:—

§ 302 "In the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in the tenth[4] year of the reign of our most pious lord, Ecgfrid, king of the Northumbrians, the fifteenth of the kalends of October, [17th September,] the eighth indiction;[5] and in the sixth year of the reign

[1] Now Redbridge. See Camd. Brit. p. 138.

[2] Now Hamble, a little to the east of Winchester. Id. col. 144.

[3] This Synod was held for the purpose of professing the faith which the Saxon church entertained with reference to the truths which had been assailed by Eutyches and the Monothelites.

[4] Pagi observes, A.D. 679, § 6, that the regnal years of Ecgfrid, Ethelred, and Lothaire, as they are here given, are apparently incorrect.

[5] Some historians have referred this synod to the year 679, misled by the indiction, which they have neglected to observe is calculated by Beda from 24th September.

of Aedilred, king of the Mercians, in the seventeenth year of the reign of Alduulf, of the East Angles, in the seventh year of the reign of Hlothare, king of Kent; Theodore, by the grace of God, archbishop of the island of Britain, and of the city of Canterbury, being president, and the other venerable bishops of the island of Britain sitting with him, the holy gospels being laid before them, at the place which, in the Saxon tongue, is called Haethfelth, we conferred together, and expounded the true and orthodox faith, as our Lord Jesus in the flesh delivered the same to his disciples, who saw his bodily presence and heard his words, and as it is delivered in the creed of the holy fathers, and by all holy and universal synods in general, and by the consent of all approved doctors of the catholic church. We, therefore, following them reverently and orthodoxly, and professing accordance to their divinely inspired doctrine, do believe, and do, according to the holy fathers, firmly confess, properly and truly, the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost, a Trinity consubstantial in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, that is, one God in three consubstantial Subsistences or Persons, of equal glory and honour."

§ 303. And after much more of this sort, appertaining to the confession of the true faith, this holy synod added to its letters, "We have received the five holy and general councils of the blessed fathers acceptable to God; that is, of the 318 bishops, who were assembled at Nice, against the most impious Arius and his tenets; and that at Constantinople, of the 150, against the madness of Macedonius and Eudoxius, and their tenets; and that first at Ephesus, of the 200, against the most wicked Nestorius, and his tenets; and that at Chalcedon, of 630, against Eutyches and Nestorius, and their tenets; and again, at Constantinople, in a fifth council, in the reign of Justinian the younger, against Theodorus and Theodoret, and the epistles of Ibas, and their tenets, against Cyril."

§ 304. And again a little lower, "The synod held in the city of Rome, in the time of the most blessed pope Martin, in the eighth indiction, and in the ninth year of the most pious emperor Constantine, we receive: and we receive and glorify our Lord Jesus Christ, as they glorified Him, neither adding nor diminishing anything; anathematizing those with heart and mouth whom they anathematized, and receiving those whom they received, glorifying God the Father, who is without beginning, and his only-begotten Son, begotten of the Father before the worlds, and the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son in an ineffable manner, as those holy apostles, prophets, and doctors, whom we have above mentioned, did declare. And all we, who, with archbishop Theodore, have thus expounded the catholic faith, have also subscribed thereto."

CHAP. XVIII. [A.D. 680.]—OF JOHN, THE SINGER OF THE APOSTOLIC SEE, WHO CAME INTO BRITAIN TO TEACH.

§ 305. AMONG those who were present at this synod, and who, in like manner, confirmed the decrees of the catholic faith, was the venerable John, archchanter of the church of the holy apostle Peter, and abbat of the monastery of the blessed Martin, who had come lately from Rome, by order of pope Agatho, under the guidance of the most reverend abbat Biscop, surnamed Benedict, of whom mention has been made above. For the said Benedict, having built a monastery in Britain, in honour of the most blessed prince of the apostles, near the mouth of the river Wear, went to Rome with Ceolfrid, his fellow-labourer and companion in that work, who was after him abbat of the same monastery; he had been several times before at Rome, and was now honourably received by pope Agatho of blessed memory; from whom he also requested and obtained the confirmation of the immunity of this monastery, being an epistle of privilege confirmed by apostolical authority, pursuant to what he knew to be the will and grant of king Ecgfrid, by whose consent, and on the land given by whom, he had built that monastery.

§ 306. He then received the aforesaid abbat John to be conducted into Britain [A.D. 678], that he might teach in his monastery the method of singing throughout the year, as it was practised at St. Peter's at Rome. The abbat John did as he had been commanded by the pope, by teaching the singers of the said monastery the order and manner of singing and reading[1] aloud, and also by committing to writing all that was requisite throughout the whole course of the year for the celebration of festivals; all which are still observed in that monastery, and have been copied by many others elsewhere. The said John not only taught the brethren of that monastery; but such as had skill in singing resorted from almost all the monasteries of the same province to hear him; and many took care to invite him to teach in other places.

§ 307. Besides singing and reading, he had also been directed by the apostolic pope carefully to inform himself concerning the faith of the English church, and to give an account thereof on his return to Rome. For he also brought with him the decision of the synod of the blessed pope Martin and 105 bishops, held not long before at Rome,[2] principally against those who taught that there was but one operation and one will in Christ; and gave it to be transcribed in the aforesaid monastery of the most religious abbat Benedict. The men who followed such opinion, much perplexed the faith of the church of Constantinople at that time; but by the help of God they were then discovered and subdued. Wherefore, pope Agatho, being desirous to be informed concerning the state of the church in Britain, as well as in other provinces, and to what extent it was

[1] If reliance can be placed upon the statement of a manuscript cited by Ussher, it would appear that the Gallican liturgy had been introduced into England by Germanus and Lupus, and that it probably had continued in general use until the time of pope Agatho.

[2] On this council, held 5th Oct. 649, against the Monothelites, see Mansi Concil. x. 863; Labb. vi. 75.

chaste from the contagion of heretics, gave this affair in charge to the most reverend abbat John, then appointed to go to Britain. The synod we have spoken of having been called for this purpose in Britain, the catholic faith was found untainted in them all, and a copy of the same given him to carry to Rome.

§ 308. But during his return to his own country, soon after crossing the sea, he fell sick and died;[1] and his body, for the love of St. Martin, over whose monastery he presided, was by his friends carried to Tours, and honourably buried; for he had been kindly entertained in the guest-house of the church there, as he was going into Britain, and earnestly entreated by the brethren, that on his return to Rome he would take that road, and pay that church a visit. In short, he was there supplied with some to conduct him on his way, and assist him in the work enjoined him. Though he died by the way, yet the copy of the faith of the English nation was carried to Rome, and most thankfully received by the apostolic pope, and all those that heard or read it.

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CHAP. XIX. [A.D. 660.]—HOW QUEEN AEDILTHRYD ALWAYS PRESERVED HER VIRGINITY, AND HER BODY COULD SUFFER NO CORRUPTION IN THE GRAVE.

§ 309. KING ECGFRID took to wife Aedilthryda,[2] the daughter of Anna, king of the East Angles, of whom mention has been often made;[3] a man very religious, and in all respects renowned for his inward disposition and actions. She had before been given in marriage to another, namely, to Tondberct, chief of the Southern Girvii; but he died soon after he had received her to wife, and she was given to the aforesaid king. Though she lived with him for twelve years, yet she preserved the glory of perfect virginity, as I was informed by bishop Uilfrid, of blessed memory, of whom I inquired, because some questioned the truth thereof; and he told me that he was a witness of her undoubted virginity, forasmuch as Ecgfrid promised him that he would give many lands and much money, if he could persuade the queen to consent to pay the marriage duty, for he knew the queen loved no man so much as himself. Nor if it to be doubted that the same might take place in our age, which true histories tell us happened several times in former ages, through the assistance of one and the same Lord who has promised to continue with us unto the end of the world; for the miraculous circumstance that her flesh, being buried, could not suffer corruption, is a token that she had not been defiled by familiarity with man.

§ 310. She had long and earnestly requested the king, that he would permit her to lay aside worldly cares, and to serve only the true king, Christ, in a monastery; and having at length with difficulty prevailed, she went as a nun into the monastery of the abbess Aebba,[4]

[1] About the end of the year 680, or the beginning of 681.

[2] She had married Tondberct two years before the death of her father, consequently in A.D. 652. Tondberct, her husband, died about A.D. 655, and the interval which occurred between that date and her marriage with Ecgfrid was spent at Ely. See the Historia Eliensis, i. 26, ed. Lond. 1848; Mabill. Act. SS. Ord. S. Bened. ii. 711.

[3] See §§ 169, 201.

[4] Ebba was the daughter of Ethelfrid, and the sister of Eanfrid, Oswald, and Osuiu, kings of Bernicia; Ecgfrid was the son of Osuiu, consequently the nephew

who was aunt to king Ecgfrid, at the place called the City Coludi,[1] having taken the veil from the hands of the aforesaid bishop Uilfrid; but a year after she was herself made abbess in the country which is called Ely, where, having built a monastery, she began, by works and examples of a heavenly life, to be the virgin-mother of very many virgins dedicated to God. It is reported of her, that from the time of her entering into the monastery, she never wore any linen, but only woollen garments, and would rarely wash in a hot bath, unless just before any of the greater festivals, as Easter, Whitsuntide, and the Epiphany, and then she did it last of all, after having, with the assistance of those about her, first washed the other servants of God there present; besides, she seldom did eat above once a day, excepting on the greater solemnities, or some other urgent occasion, unless some considerable disorder obliged her. From the time of matin service, she continued in the church at prayer till it was daybreak, unless some severe infirmity prevented her; some also say that, by the spirit of prophecy, she, in the presence of all, not only foretold the pestilence of which she was to die, but also the number of those that should be then snatched away out of her monastery. She was taken to our Lord, in the midst of her flock, seven years after she had been made abbess [A.D. 679]; and, as she had ordered, was buried in a wooden coffin[2] among them, according to the succession in which she had died.

§ 311. She was succeeded in the office of abbess by her sister Sexburg,[3] who had been wife to Earconberct, king of Kent; who, when [her sister] had been buried sixteen years, [A.D. 695,] thought fit to take up her bones, and putting them into a new coffin, to translate them into the church. Accordingly she ordered some of the brethren to provide a stone to make a coffin of; they accordingly went on board ship, (because the country of Ely is on every side encompassed with the sea or marshes, and has no large stones,) and came to a small abandoned city, not far from thence, which, in the language of the English, is called Grantchester,[4] and presently, near the city walls, they found a white marble coffin, most beautifully wrought, and neatly covered with a lid of the same sort of stone. Concluding therefore that God had prospered their journey, they returned thanks to Him, and carried it to the monastery.

§ 312. The body of the holy virgin and spouse of Christ, when her grave was opened, being brought into sight, was found as free from corruption as if she had died and been buried on that very day; as the aforesaid bishop Uilfrid, and many others that know it, testify. But the physician, Cynifrid, who was present at her

of Ebba. Her name is preserved in the promontory near Coldingham, named St. Abb's Head; and in the nunnery of Ebchester, near the river Derwent, in Durham, which was afterwards destroyed by the Danes. See Tanner, Notit. Monast. Durham, vi.; Acta SS. mens. Aug. v. 194.

[1] Now Coldingham, in Berwickshire.

[2] This burial in a wooden coffin was a deviation from the usual custom, which gave the preference to stone. See instances in Vit. S. Ebrulfi Uticensis, § 25, ap. Mabill. Acta SS. i. 341; S. Arnulfi ep. Mettensis, Id. ii. 146, § 23; S. Baboleni, Id. p. 567, § 12.

[3] A sketch of her life may be seen in the Acta SS. Jul. ii. 346, to which add the particulars given in the Monast. Anglic. i. 88.

[4] Now Cranchester, a little village near Cambridge. See Usher, Primord. p. 61.

death, and when she was taken up out of the grave, was wont of more certain knowledge to relate, that in her sickness she had a very great swelling under her jaw. "And I was ordered," said he, "to lay open that swelling, to let out the noxious matter in it, which I did, and she seemed to be somewhat easier for two days, so that many thought she might recover from her disease; but on the third day the former pains returning more severely, she was soon snatched out of the world, and exchanged all pain and death for everlasting life and health. And when so many years after, her bones were to be taken out of the grave, a pavilion being spread over it, all the congregation of brethren were on the one side, and of sisters on the other, standing about it singing; and the abbess, with a few, being gone in to take up and wash the bones, on a sudden we heard the abbess from within loudly cry out, 'Glory be to the name of the Lord!' Not long after they called me in, opening the door of the pavilion, where I saw the body of the holy virgin taken out of the grave and laid on a bed, as if it had been asleep; then taking off the veil from the face, they also showed the incision which I had made, healed up; so that, to my great astonishment, instead of the open gaping wound with which she had been buried, there then appeared only a very slender scar."

§ 313. Besides, all the linen clothes in which the body had been wrapped, appeared entire, and as fresh as if they had been that very day wrapped about her chaste limbs. It is reported, that when she was much troubled with the aforesaid swelling and pain in her jaw or neck, she was much pleased with that sort of distemper, and was wont to say, "I know assuredly that I deservedly bear the weight of my sickness on my neck, for I remember, when I was very young, I bore there the needless weight of jewels; and therefore I believe the divine goodness would have me endure this pain in my neck, that I may be absolved from the guilt of my needless levity, having now, instead of gold and pearls, a red swelling and burning on my neck." It happened also that by the touch of that clothing, devils were expelled from bodies possessed, and other disorders were sometimes cured; and the coffin in which she was first buried is reported to have cured some of distempers in the eyes, for the patients, praying with their heads touching that coffin, presently were delivered from the pain or dimness in their eyes. The virgins washed the body, and having clothed it in new garments, carried it into the church, and laid it in the coffin that had been brought, where it is held in great veneration to this day. The coffin was found in a wonderful manner, as fitted for the virgin's body as if it had been made purposely for her, and the place intended for the head was particularly cut, exactly fit for her head, and shaped to a nicety.

§ 314. Ely is in the province of the East Angles, a country of about six hundred families, in the likeness of an island, enclosed, as has been said, either with marshes or waters, and therefore it has its name from the great plenty of eels which are taken in those marshes; there the aforesaid servant of Christ desired to have a monastery, because, as we have before observed, she was descended from that same province of the East Angles.

CHAP. XX. [A.D. 660.]—A HYMN ON THE AFORESAID HOLY VIRGIN.

§ 315. I THINK it proper to insert in this History a hymn of virginity, which I composed in elegiac verse several years ago, in praise and honour of the same queen and spouse of Christ; and therefore truly a queen, because the spouse of Christ; and to imitate the method of the holy Scripture, in the history of which many poetical pieces are inserted which are known to be composed in metre.

Hail, Triune Power, who rulest every age,
Assist the numbers which my pen engage.
Let Maro wars in loftier numbers sing,
I sound the praises of our heavenly King.
Chaste is my verse, nor Helen's rape I write;
Light tales like these, but prove the mind as light.
See! from on high the God descends, confined
In Mary's womb, to rescue lost mankind.
Behold! a spotless maid a God brings forth,
A God is born, who gave e'en nature birth!
The virgin-choir the mother-maid resound,
And, chaste themselves, her praises shout around.
Her bright example numerous votaries raise,
Tread spotless paths, and imitate her ways.
The bless'd Agatha and Eulalia trust
Sooner to flames, than far more dangerous lust.
Tecla and chaste Euphemia overcame
The fear of beasts to save a virgin name.
Agnes and sweet Cecilia, joyful maids,
Smile while the pointed sword their breast invades.
Triumphing joy attends the peaceful soul,
Where no heat reigns, nor wishes mean control.
Thus Etheldryda, pure from sensual crime,
Bright shining star! arose to bless our time.
Born of a regal race, the child of kings,
More noble honour to her Lord she brings.
A queen her name, her hand a sceptre rears,
But greater glories wait above the spheres.
What man wouldst thou desire? See Christ is made
Her spouse, her bless'd Redeemer weds the maid.
While you attend the heavenly Mother's train,
Thou shalt be mother of a heavenly reign.
The holy maid who twelve years sat a queen,
A nun devoted then to God was seen.
Noted for pious deeds, her spotless soul
Left the vile world, and soar'd above the pole.
Sixteen Novembers since was the bless'd maid
Entomb'd, whose flesh no putrid damps invade.
Thy grace, O Christ! for in the grave was found
No tainted vest wrapping thy corpse around.
The swelling dropsy, and dire atrophy,
A pale disease from the blest vestments fly.
Rage fires the fiend, who whilom Eve betray'd,
While shouting angels hail the glorious maid.
See! wedded to her God, what joy remains,
In earth, or heaven, see! with her God she reigns!
Behold! the spouse, the festal torches shine,
He comes! behold! what joyful gifts are thine!
Thou a new song on the sweet harp shalt sing,
A hymn of praise to thy celestial King.
None from the flock of the throned Lamb shall move
Whom grateful passion bind, and heavenly love.

CHAP. XXI. [A.D. 679.]—HOW BISHOP THEODORE MADE PEACE BETWEEN THE KINGS ECGFRID AND AEDILRED.

§ 316. In the ninth[1] year of the reign of king Ecgfrid, a great battle was fought between him and Aedilred, king of the Mercians, near the river Trent,[2] and Aelfuini, brother to king Ecgfrid, was slain, a youth about eighteen years of age, and much beloved by both provinces, for king Aedilred had married his sister Osthryd. There now seemed reason to expect a more bloody war, and more lasting enmity between those kings and their fierce nations; but Theodore, the bishop, beloved of God, relying on the divine assistance, by his wholesome admonitions entirely extinguished the dangerous fire that was breaking out; so that the kings and their people on both sides being appeased, no man was put to death, but only the usual mulct[3] in money paid to the king for his brother, of whom he was the avenger; and this treaty of peace continued long after between those kings and their kingdoms.

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CHAP. XXII. [A.D. 679.]—HOW A CERTAIN CAPTIVE'S CHAINS FELL OFF WHEN MASSES WERE SUNG FOR HIM.

§ 317. In the aforesaid battle, wherein Aelfuini, the king, was killed, a memorable fact is known to have happened, which I think ought not to be passed by in silence; for the relation of the same will conduce to the salvation of many. In that battle, one Imma, a youth belonging to the king's army, was left as dead, and having lain like one dead all that day and the next night among the dead bodies, at length he came to himself, and sitting, he bound up his wounds in the best way he could. Then having rested awhile, he raised himself up, and began to go off to seek some friends that might take care of him; but in so doing he was discovered and taken prisoner by some of the enemy's army, and carried before their lord, who was an earl belonging to king Aedilred. Being asked by him who he was, and fearing to own himself a soldier, he answered that he was a peasant, poor and married, and that he came to the army with others to bring provisions to the soldiers. The earl received him, and ordered his wounds to be dressed; and when he began to recover, to prevent his escaping, he ordered him to be bound; but that could not be performed, for as soon as they that had bound him were gone, his bonds were all loosened.

§ 318. For he had a brother called Tunna, who was a priest and

[1] Since the ninth regnal year of Ecgfrid terminated on 15th Feb. 679, the death of Elfwin must have happened between the preceding Christmas (when, according to the Saxon mode of computation, the year commenced) and that date. It is assigned to this year by Beda himself, in the epitome affixed to his work.

[2] Smith is inclined to place the site of this battle near Hacthfaelth, (Hatfield ?) in Yorkshire; but there seems greater reason to suppose that it happened in Staffordshire, at a place called Elford (*i. e.* Aelfuine's ford) upon the Trent. Gibson, in his additions to Camden's Brit. col. 636, describes a tumulus which may possibly have some connexion with this engagement.

[3] This was the wer-gild, "the price at which each man was valued, according to his degree, which, in the event of his being slain, was to be paid to his relatives, or to his gild-brethren." See Thorpe's Glossary to the Anglo-Saxon Laws.

abbat of a monastery in the city which from him is still called Tunnacaester.[1] Hearing that his brother had been killed in the fight, he went to see whether he could find his body; and finding another very like him in all respects, concluding it to be his, he carried the same to his monastery, and buried it honourably, and took care often to say masses for the absolution of his soul; the celebration whereof occasioned what I have said, that none could bind him but he was presently loosed again. In the meantime, the earl that kept him was amazed, and began to inquire why he could not be bound; whether he had any spells[2] about him, as are spoken of in fabulous stories. He answered that he knew nothing of those contrivances; "but I have," said he, "a brother who is a priest in my country, and I know that he, supposing me to be killed, causes frequent masses to be said for me; and if I were now in the other life, my soul there, through his intercession, would be delivered from punishment."

§ 319. Having continued with the earl some time, those who attentively observed him, by his countenance, dress, and discourse, took notice, that he was not of the meaner sort, as he had said, but of the nobility. The earl then privately sending for him, pressed to know who he was, promising to do him no harm, if he would ingenuously confess his quality. Which when he had done, declaring that he had been the king's servant, the earl answered, "I truly perceived by each of your answers that you were no peasant. And now you deserve to die, because all my brothers and relations were killed in that fight; yet I will not put you to death, because it will be a breach of my promise."

§ 320. As soon, therefore, as he was recovered, he sold him at London, to a certain Frisian,[3] but he could not by any means be bound by him the whole way as he was led along; but when, though his enemies put several sorts of bonds on him, the buyer perceived that he could in no way be bound, he gave him leave to ransom himself if he could. It was at the third[4] hour, when the masses were wont to be said, that his bonds were generally loosed. He, having taken an oath that he would either return, or send him the money for his ransom, went into Kent to king Hlotheri, who was son[5] of the sister of queen Aedilthryda, above spoken of, for he had once been the servant to the said queen. From him he asked and obtained the price of his ransom, and as he had promised, sent it to his master.

§ 321. Returning afterwards into his own country, and coming to his brother, he gave him an exact account of all his misfortunes, and the comfort which he had experienced under them; and by his

[1] The locality is uncertain. Towcester in Northamptonshire has been conjectured, but with no certainty.

[2] Concerning the "litteræ solutoriæ," or Ἐφέσια γράμματα, see a passage from Suidas quoted by Smith.

[3] Beda does not inform us, which we should have gladly known, whether this merchant was the descendant of one of the early Frisian settlers in England, or a stranger from the continent.

[4] The third hour of the natural day, that is, at nine o'clock in the morning.

[5] Namely, of Sexburga, who married Earconberht, king of Kent, by whom she became the mother of Lothaire.

relation he understood, that his bonds had been loosed chiefly at those times when masses had been celebrated for him; and that other advantages which had happened to him in his time of danger, had been conferred on him from heaven, through the intercession of his brother, and the oblation of the saving sacrifice. Many persons, on hearing this account from the aforesaid man, were stirred up in the faith and devotion of piety either to prayer, or to almsgiving, or to offer up to our Lord the victims of the holy oblation, for the deliverance of their friends who had departed from this world; for they understood that such saving sacrifice was available for the eternal redemption both of body and soul. This history was also told me by some of those who had heard it related by the person himself to whom it happened; therefore, I have thought fit to insert it in my Ecclesiastical History, since I had it clearly related to me.

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### Chap. XXIII. [A.D. 680.]—Of the Life and Death of the Abbess Hilda.

§ 322. In the year next following, that is, in the year of the incarnation of our Lord 680, the most religious servant of Christ, Hild,[1] abbess of the monastery that is called Streaneshalch, as above mentioned,[2] after having performed many heavenly works on earth, passed from hence to receive the rewards of the heavenly life, on the fifteenth of the kalends of December [17th Nov.], at the age of sixty-six years; which being equally divided, the first thirty-three she spent[3] living most nobly in the secular habit; and more nobly dedicated the remaining half to our Lord in a monastic life. For she was nobly born, being the daughter of Hereric, nephew to king Aeduini, with which king she also embraced the faith and sacraments of Christ, at the preaching of Paulinus, the first bishop of the Northumbrians, of blessed memory, and preserved the same undefiled till she attained to the vision of Him in heaven.

§ 323. [A.D. 647.] Resolving to quit the secular habit, and to serve Him alone, she withdrew into the province of the East Angles, for she was allied to the king; being desirous, if possible, to pass over from thence into France, to forsake her native country and all whatsoever she had, and so live a stranger for our Lord in the monastery of Cale,[4] that she might with more ease attain to the eternal kingdom in heaven; because her sister Heresuid, mother to Alduulf, king of the East Angles, at that time living in the same monastery, under regular discipline, was waiting for her eternal crown. Imitating her example, she continued a whole year in the

[1] Hild, abbess of Stranshall, or Whitby, was of the royal race of Deira, being the daughter of Hereric, the nephew of Eadwine. She was born A.D. 614.

[2] See § 222.

[3] This change took place in 647, or at latest in 648.

[4] Pagi (ad an. 680, §§ 14—19) discusses at considerable length the question, whether Hereswitha was ever an inmate of the monastery of Chelles, and decides that Beda is here in error when he makes this assertion, and that he has confounded Chelles with some other monastery. Chelles was founded in 662 by queen Clotilda, wife of Clovis the First, and considerably augmented by Bathildis, wife of Clovis the Second.

aforesaid province,[1] with the design of going abroad; afterwards, bishop Aedan being recalled home, he gave her the land of one family on the north side[2] of the river Wear; where for a year she also led a monastic life, with very few companions.

§ 324. [A.D. 650.] After[3] this she was made abbess in the monastery called Heruteu,[4] which monastery had been founded, not long before, by the religious servant of Christ, Heiu, who is said to have been the first woman that in the province of the Northumbrians took upon her the purpose and garb of a nun, being consecrated by bishop Aedan; but she, soon after she had founded that monastery, went away to the city Calcaria, which by the Angles is called Kaelcacaestir,[5] and there fixed her dwelling. Hild, the servant of Christ, being set over that monastery, began immediately to reduce all things to a regular system, according as she could ascertain it from learned men; for bishop Aidan, and as many religious men as knew her, frequently visited, warmly loved, and diligently instructed her, because of her innate wisdom and inclination to the service of God.

§ 325. [A.D. 658.] When she had for some years[6] governed this monastery, wholly intent upon establishing a regular life, it happened that she also undertook to build and to arrange a monastery in the place called Streaneshalch, and this work which she had enjoined to herself she industriously performed; for she placed this monastery under the same regular discipline as she had done the former; and taught there the strict observance of justice, piety, chastity, and other virtues, and particularly of peace and love; so that, after the example of the primitive church, no person was there rich, and none poor, all things being in common to all, and none having any property. Her prudence was so great, that not only persons of the middle rank, but even kings and princes, sometimes asked and received her advice; she obliged those who were under her direction to attend so much to the reading of the holy Scriptures, and to exercise themselves so much in works of justice, that many might very easily be there found fit for ecclesiastical duties, that is, to serve at the altar.

§ 326. In short, we afterwards saw five bishops[7] taken out of that monastery, and all of them men of singular merit and sanctity, whose names were Bosa, Aetla, Oftfor, John, and Uilfrid. We have above[8] taken notice, that the first of them was consecrated bishop at York; of the second, it is to be briefly observed that he was appointed bishop of Dorchester. Of the last we shall speak

[1] In the province, namely, of East Anglia; consequently, the opinion of Harpsfield and others, who imagine from this passage that Hild went to Chelles, is unfounded.

[2] The site of this monastery cannot now be ascertained.

[3] About the year 650.

[4] Now Hartlepool, in the county of Durham, Camd. Brit. col. 943.

[5] This locality is uncertain; perhaps Tadeaster, in Yorkshire. See the reasons for this opinion as stated by Camden, Brit. coll. 869, 870.

[6] Her removal to Whitby, which took place in 658, is more fully mentioned § 222.

[7] We hence discover that the monastery of Whitby, over which Hild presided, was a double one, and that as well nuns as monks were under her superintendence.

[8] See § 288.

hereafter, that they were consecrated, the first as bishop of the church of Hagustald, the second of that of York; of the third,[1] [namely, Oftfor,] we will here state that, having applied himself to the reading and study of the Scriptures in both the monasteries of the abbess Hild, at length, being desirous to attain to greater perfection, he went into Kent, to archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory; where having spent some more time in sacred studies, he also resolved to go to Rome, which, in those days, was reckoned a thing of great moment: returning thence into Britain, he turned aside into the province of the Huiccii, where king Osric[2] then ruled, and continued there a long time, preaching the word of faith, and making himself an example of good life to all that saw and heard him. At that time, Bosel, the bishop of that province, laboured under such weakness of body, that he could not by himself perform the episcopal functions; for which reason, this person [Oftfor] was, by universal consent, chosen bishop in his stead, and by order of king Aedilred,[3] consecrated by bishop Uilfrid, of blessed memory, who then filled the bishopric of the Midland Angles, because archbishop Theodore was dead, and no other bishop ordained in his place. A little before this, that is, before the aforesaid man of God, Bosel, a most learned and industrious man, and of excellent ability, Tatfrid, had been chosen bishop in that province, from the monastery of the same abbess, but had been snatched away by an untimely death, before he could be ordained.

§ 327. Thus this handmaiden of Christ, abbess Hild, whom all that knew her called Mother, for her singular piety and grace, was not only an example of good life to those that lived in her monastery, but afforded occasion of salvation and amendment to many who lived at a distance, to whom the happy fame was brought of her industry and virtue; for it was necessary that the dream which her mother, Bregusuid, had, during her infancy, should be fulfilled. At the time that her husband, Hereric, lived in banishment, under Cerdic,[4] king of the Britons, where he was also poisoned, she saw in a dream, that she was seeking for him most carefully, and could find no sign of him anywhere; but after having used all her industry in seeking him, she suddenly found a most precious jewel under her garment, which, whilst she was looking on it very attentively, cast such a light as spread itself throughout all the ends of

[1] Oftfor was probably consecrated bishop of Worcester by Wilfrid, A.D. 691, to which year it is referred by Florence of Worcester. It must assuredly have occurred after September 690, the date of Theodore's death. The date of the decease of Oftfor is uncertain; but we probably ought to follow the Worcester Annals, (Angl. Sacr. i. 470,) which tell us that he died A.D. 692, as also Florence of Worcester. If this be correct, the charter assigned by Kemble, No. xxxv., to A.D. 693, must be referred to the previous year, as it is attested by Oftfor, among others.

[2] The succession of the rulers of the petty states which sprung out of the great kingdom of Mercia is obscure. It is certain, however, that Osric ruled over the Huiccas in November, 676. See Kemble, Cod. Diplom. No. xii.

[3] Ethelred was king of Mercia, and, as such, seems to have exercised authority over the petty states of the Huiccians.

[4] It is not easy to decide who this Cerdic, king of the Britons, was. Petrie suggests that he was perhaps the Cherede, or Ceretic, who is mentioned in the Annales Cambriæ, ad an. 616; or Ceretic, king of Elmet, concerning whom, see the Appendix to Nennius.

Britain; which dream was truly brought to pass in her daughter whom we speak of, whose life was a bright example, not only to herself, but to all who desired to live well.

§ 328. When she had governed this monastery many years, it pleased Him who has made such merciful provision for our salvation, to give her holy soul the trial of a long sickness of the body, to the end that, according to the apostle's example, her virtue might be perfected in infirmity. [2 Cor. xii. 9.] For being smitten with a fever, she fell into a violent heat, and was afflicted with the same for six successive years continually; during all which time she never failed either to return thanks to her Maker, or publicly and privately to instruct the flock committed to her charge; for by her own example she admonished all persons to serve God dutifully while in perfect health, and always to return thanks to Him in adversity, or in bodily infirmity. In the seventh year of her sickness, the distemper turning inwards, she approached her last day; and about cockcrowing, having received the viaticum of the holy Communion on her way, and having called together the handmaidens of Christ that were within the same monastery, she admonished them to preserve evangelical peace among themselves, and with all others; and as she was exhorting them, she joyfully saw death[1] approaching, or, if I may speak in the words of our Lord, passed from death to life. [John v. 24.]

§ 329. That same night it pleased Almighty God, by a manifest vision, to reveal her death in another monastery, at a considerable distance from hers, which she had built that same year, and which is called Hacanos.[2] There was in that monastery a certain nun called Begu,[3] who, having dedicated her virginity to God, had served Him upwards of thirty years in monastical conversation. This nun, being then sleeping in the dormitory of the sisters, on a sudden heard the well-known sound of a bell[4] in the air, which used to awake and call them to prayers, when any one of them was taken out of this world; and opening her eyes, as she thought, she saw the roof of the house opened, and a strong light pour in from above, which entirely filled it; and looking earnestly upon that light, she saw the soul of the aforesaid servant of God in that same light, carried up into heaven, attended and conducted by angels. Then awaking, and seeing the other sisters sleeping round about

[1] According to the Anglo-Saxon Menologium, she died on the 18th of the kalends of January (15th Dec.); but Florence of Worcester (p. 536, ed. Petrie) on the 15th of the kalends of December (17th Nov.), 680. The calendar in the Cotton MS., Julius A. X., agrees with the Menologium, and so also does Capgrave.

[2] Hackness, near Whitby, to which abbey it was granted by William the Conqueror. See Monast. Anglic. i. 72.

[3] This Bega, whose memory is preserved in the name of St. Bees, in Cumberland, was of Irish descent, and came to England to avoid marriage. A legend of her, composed, probably, about the end of the twelfth century, is preserved in MS. Cott. Faust. B. iv. See Acta SS. 6th Sept. p. 694. She is not noticed by Capgrave, but occurs in the Legendary appended to the Breviary of Aberdeen.

[4] Illustrations of the custom here noticed, by which the inmates of the monastery were summoned by a bell to pray for the soul of the parting sister or brother, may be seen in the life of Columbanus (Mabill. Annal. Bened. ii. 14, § 29), Bertilla, abbess of Chelles (Id. iii. part i. p. 19, § 3), and Sturmius (Id. part ii. p. 257. § 24).

her, she perceived that what she had seen was revealed to her either in a dream or a vision; and rising immediately in a great fright, she ran to the virgin who then presided in the monastery instead of the abbess, and whose name was Frigyd, and, with many tears and deep-drawn sighs, told her that the abbess Hild, the mother of them all, had then departed this life, and had in her sight ascended to eternal bliss, and to the company of the inhabitants of heaven, with a great light, and with angels conducting her. She having heard it, awoke all the sisters, and calling them into the church, admonished them to pray and sing psalms for the soul of their mother; which they did diligently during the remainder of the night; and at break of day, the brethren came with the intelligence of her death, from the place where she had died. They answered that they knew it before, and then related in order how and when they had heard it; by which it appeared that her death had been revealed to them in a vision the very same hour that the others said she had died. Thus it was by heaven happily ordained, that when some saw her departure out of this world, the others should be acquainted with her admittance into the spiritual life which is eternal. These monasteries are almost thirteen miles distant from each other.

§ 330. It is also reported, that her death was, in a vision, made known the same night to one of the holy virgins who loved her most passionately, in the same monastery where the said servant of God died. This nun saw her soul ascend to heaven in the company of angels; and this she openly declared, the very same hour that it happened, to those servants of Christ that were with her; and awakened them to pray for her soul, even before the rest of the congregation had heard of her death; the truth of which was known to the whole monastery in the morning. This same nun was at that time with some other servants of Christ, in the remotest[1] part of the monastery, where the women newly entered were wont to be upon trial, till they were regularly admitted, and taken into the society of the congregation.

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### Chap. XXIV. [A.D. 680?]—There was in her monastery a Brother, on whom the gift of writing Verses was bestowed by Heaven.

§ 331. There was in this abbess's monastery a certain brother, particularly remarkable for the grace of God, who was wont to make pious and religious verses, so that whatever was interpreted to him out of Scripture, he soon after put the same into poetical expressions of much sweetness and feeling, in English, which was his native language. By his verses the minds of many were often excited to despise the world, and to aspire to the life in heaven.

[1] The novices were, during the period of their noviciate, separated from the professed; that if they should return to the world, they should not be able to reveal the secrets of the monastery. The authority for this arrangement is to be found in the Rule of St. Benedict, cap. lxv.

Others of the English nation, after him, attempted to compose religious poems, but none could compare with him, for he did not learn the art of poetry from men, nor of man, but from God; but being assisted from above he freely received the gift of God. For this reason he never could compose any trivial or idle poem, but only those which relate to religion suited his religious tongue; for having lived in a secular habit till he was well advanced in years, he had never learned anything of versifying; for which reason being sometimes at entertainments, when it was agreed for the sake of mirth that all present should sing in their turns, when he saw the harp come towards him, he rose up from the middle of the supper and returned to his own home.

§ 332. Having done so at a certain time, and gone out of the house where the entertainment was, to the stable, where he had to take care of the cattle that night, he there laid himself down to rest at the proper time; a person appeared to him in his sleep, and saluting him by his name, said, "Caedmon, sing some song to me." He answered, "I cannot sing; for that was the reason why I left the entertainment, and retired to this place, because I could not sing." The other who talked to him, replied, "However you shall sing to me."—"What shall I sing?" rejoined he. "Sing the beginning of created beings," said the other. Having received this answer he presently began to sing verses to the praise of God the Creator, which he had never before heard, the purport whereof was thus:—We[1] now ought to praise the Maker of the heavenly kingdom, the power of the Creator and his counsel, the deeds of the Father of glory. How He, being the eternal God, became the author of all miracles, who first, as almighty preserver of the human race, created heaven for the sons of men as the roof of the house, and next the earth." This is the sense, but not the words in order as he sang them in his sleep; for verses, though never so well composed, cannot be literally translated out of one language into another, without losing much of their beauty and loftiness. Awaking from his sleep, he remembered all that he had sung in his dream, and soon added much more to the same effect in verse worthy of the Deity.

§ 333. In the morning he came to the steward, his superior, and having acquainted him with the gift which he had received, was conducted to the abbess, by whom he was ordered, in the presence of many learned men, to tell his dream, and repeat the verses, that they might all give their judgment what it was, and whence his verse proceeded. They all concluded, that heavenly grace had been conferred on him by our Lord. They explained to him a

[1] Caedmon, or one of his imitators here mentioned, wrote a poem of considerable length upon the fall and redemption of mankind, of which an excellent edition by Mr. Thorpe was published in 1832 by the Society of Antiquaries of London.

[2] Beda here only gives a Latin paraphrase of Caedmon's exordium; and the Anglo-Saxon lines found in king Alfred's version have been supposed by some to be a mere re-translation of Beda's Latin. But as a copy of the Saxon text is found in the margin of the MS. of Beda, (now in the public library at Cambridge, K. K. v. 16,) supposed to have been written at Wearmouth within two or three years after Beda's death, there seems to be little doubt that they are the original lines. See Wright's Biogr. Brit., Anglo-Saxon Period, p. 194.

passage in holy writ, either historical, or doctrinal, ordering him, if he could, to put the same into verse. Having undertaken it, he went away, and returning the next morning, gave it to them composed in most excellent verse; whereupon the abbess, embracing the grace of God in the man, instructed him to quit the secular habit, and take upon him the monastic life; which being accordingly done, she associated him with the rest of the brethren in her monastery, and ordered that he should be taught the whole series of sacred history. Thus he, keeping in mind all he heard, and as it were, like a clean animal, chewing the cud, converted the narrative into most harmonious verse; and sweetly repeating the same, made his masters in their turn his hearers. He sang of the creation of the world, of the origin of man, and of all the history of Genesis; of the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and their entering into the land of promise, with many other histories from holy writ; of the incarnation, passion, and resurrection of our Lord, and of his ascension into heaven; of the coming of the Holy Ghost, and the preaching of the apostles; also of the terror of future judgment, the horror of the pains of hell, and the delights of heaven; besides many more about the divine benefits and judgments: by all which he endeavoured to turn away men from the love of vice, and to excite in them the love of, and application to, good actions. For he was a very religious man, humbly submissive to regular discipline, but full of zeal against those who behaved themselves otherwise; for which reason he ended his life happily.

§ 334. For when the time of his departure drew near, he laboured for the space of fourteen days under a bodily infirmity which seemed to prepare the way for him, yet so moderate that he could talk and walk the whole time. Near at hand was the house into which those that were sick, and like shortly to die, were carried. He desired the person that attended him, in the evening, as the night came on in which he was to depart this life, to make ready a place there for him to take his rest. This person, wondering why he should desire it, because there was as yet no sign of his dying soon, yet did what he had ordered. He accordingly was placed there, and conversing pleasantly in a joyful manner with the rest that were in the house before, when it was past midnight, he asked them, whether[1] they had the Eucharist there? They answered, "What need of the Eucharist? for you are not likely to die, since you talk so joyfully with us, as if you were in perfect health."—"However," said he, "bring me the

[1] It may safely be inferred, I think, from this passage, that in the early Saxon church the consecrated elements were not always given to the recipient by the hand of the consecrating priest, but might be transmitted from him through another to the communicant; and further, that they were reserved in the infirmary, that they might be at hand on any sudden emergency, as on the present occasion. Thus in the Articles of Inquiry instituted by Hincmar of Rheims, he asks, "Does the priest himself visit the sick, and anoint them with holy oil, and himself give them the holy communion; or does he do this by another? and does he himself give the communion to the people, or does he give the communion to some lay person to carry to his house for the use of the sick man?" Labb. Concil. viii. 573. The like inquiries are made by Ratherius, bishop of Verona, and by Regino.

Eucharist." Having received the same into his hand,[1] he asked, whether they were all in charity with him, and without any ill-will or rancour? They answered, that they were all in perfect charity, and free from all anger; and in their turn asked him, whether he was in the same mind towards them? He immediately answered, "I am in charity, my children, with all the servants of God." Then strengthening himself with the heavenly viaticum, he prepared for the entrance into another life, and asked, how near the hour was when the brethren were to be awakened to sing the nocturnal lauds of our Lord? They answered, "It is not far off." Then he said, "It is well, let us wait that hour;" and signing himself with the sign of the cross, he laid his head on the pillow, and falling into a gentle slumber, so ended his life in silence.

Thus it came to pass, that as he had served God with a simple and pure mind, and tranquil devotion, so he now departed to his presence, leaving the world by a tranquil death; and that tongue, which had composed so many holy words in praise of the Creator, in like manner uttered its last words whilst he was in the act of signing himself with the cross, and recommending his spirit into the hands of God. From what has been here said, he would seem to have had a foreknowledge of his own death.

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CHAP. XXV. [A.D. 679.]—OF THE VISION THAT APPEARED TO A CERTAIN MAN OF GOD BEFORE THE MONASTERY OF THE CITY COLUDI WAS CONSUMED BY FIRE.

§ 335. AT this time, the monastery of virgins, called the city of Coludi, above-mentioned,[2] was entirely burned down, through carelessness; and yet all that knew the same, might very easily observe that it happened through the malice of those who dwelt in it, and chiefly of those who seemed to be the greatest. But there wanted not a warning of the approaching punishment from the divine goodness, by which they might have been corrected, and by fasting, tears, and prayers, like the Ninevites, have averted the anger of the just Judge.

§ 336. There was in that same monastery a man of the Scottish race, called Adamnan,[3] leading a life entirely devoted to God in continence and prayer, insomuch that he never took any food or drink, except only on Sundays and Thursdays; but often spent whole nights in prayer. This austerity of life he had first adopted from necessity, to correct his evil propensities; but in process of time the necessity had become a custom.

§ 337. For in his youth he had been guilty of some wicked

[1] Bingham (XV. v. § 6) has collected various examples from the writings of the fathers, for the purpose of showing that the custom here mentioned, by which the communicant was permitted to receive the consecrated bread into his hand, was the usage of the primitive church. See also Mabill. Præf. ad Acta SS. Bened. iii. § 76; Larroque, Hist. de l'Euchar. p. 283, ed. Amst. 1671. It is well known that at a later period this usage was changed, the priest putting the consecrated wafer into the mouth of the communicant.

[2] See § 310.

[3] This Adamnan must be distinguished from his more celebrated namesake, the abbot of Iona, whom Beda mentions § 402. See Ussher, Brit. Eccl. Antiq. p. 367.

action, for which crime, when he came to himself, he conceived the deepest horror, and dreaded lest he should be punished for the same by the strict Judge. Repairing, therefore, to a priest, who he hoped might be able to show him the way of salvation, he confessed his guilt, and desired to be advised how he might flee from the wrath to come. The priest having heard his offence, said, "A great wound requires much attention in the cure; and, therefore, give yourself up as far as you are able to fasting, reading of psalms, and prayer, to the end, that thus preventing the face of our Lord by confession, you may find Him merciful." Being highly oppressed with the grief of a guilty conscience, and desiring, as soon as possible, to be loosed from the inward fetters of sin, which lay heavy upon him, he answered, "I am young in years, and strong of body, and shall, therefore, easily bear whatsoever you shall enjoin me to do, if only I may be saved in the day of the Lord; even though you should command me to spend the whole night in prayer standing, and to pass the whole week in abstinence." The priest replied, "It is too much for you to continue the whole week without bodily sustenance; but it is sufficient to fast two or three days; do this till I come again to you in a short time, when I will more fully show you what you ought to do, and how long to continue your penance." Having so said, and prescribed the measure of his penance, the priest went away; and some sudden occasion arising, he passed over into Ireland, whence he derived his origin, and returned no more to him, as he had appointed. Remembering this injunction and his own promise, he totally addicted himself to tears of penance, holy watching, and continence; so that he only tasted food on Thursdays and Sundays, as has been said; and remained fasting all the other days of the week. When he heard that his priest was gone to Ireland, and had died there, he ever after observed that same abstinence according to his said direction; and as he had at first begun that course through the fear of God, in penitence for his guilt, so he still continued the same unremittingly for the divine love, and in hope of his reward.

§ 338. Having practised this carefully for a long time, it happened that he had gone on a certain day to a distance from that monastery, accompanied by one of the brethren; and as they were returning from this journey, when they drew near to the monastery, and beheld its lofty buildings, the man of God burst out into tears, and his countenance discovered the sadness of his heart. His companion, perceiving it, asked what was the reason, to which he answered: "The time is at hand, when a devouring fire shall reduce to ashes all the buildings which you here behold, both public and private." The other, hearing these words, as soon as they came into the monastery, told them to Aebba, the mother of the congregation. She, with good cause, being much troubled at that prediction, called the man to her, and narrowly inquired of him how he came to know it. He answered, "Being busy one night lately in watching and singing psalms, I on a sudden saw a person of unknown aspect standing by me, and being alarmed at his presence, he bade me not to fear, and speaking to me as it were in a familiar

manner, 'You do well,' said he, 'in that you spend this night-time of rest, not in giving yourself up to sleep, but in watching and prayers.' I answered, 'I know I have great need of devoting myself to wholesome watching, and earnest praying to our Lord, that he would pardon my transgressions.' He replied, 'You say what is right, for you and many more do need to redeem their sins by good works, and when they cease from labouring about temporal affairs, then to labour the more eagerly for the desire of heavenly goods; but this very few do; for I, having now visited all this monastery in succession, have looked into every one's chambers and beds, and found none of them all except yourself busy about the care of his soul; but all of them, both men and women, either indulge themselves in slothful sleep, or are awake in order to commit sin. For even the cells[1] that were built for praying or reading, are now converted into places of feasting, drinking, talking, and other luxuries; and the virgins dedicated to God, laying aside the respect due to their profession, whensoever they are at leisure, apply themselves to weaving fine garments, either to use in adorning themselves like brides, to the danger of their condition, or to gain the friendship of strange men; for which reason a heavy judgment from heaven is deservedly ready to fall on this place and its inhabitants by devouring fire.'" The abbess said, "Why did you not sooner acquaint me with what you knew?" He answered, "I was afraid to do it, out of respect to you, lest you should be too much afflicted; yet you may have this comfort, that the calamity will not happen in your days." This vision being divulged abroad, the inhabitants of that place were for a few days in some little fear, and leaving off their sins, began to punish themselves; but after the abbess's death they returned to their former filthy conversation, nay, they became more wicked; and when they thought themselves in peace and security, they forthwith suffered the punishment of the aforesaid vengeance.

§ 339. That all this so happened, was told me by my most reverend fellow-priest, Aedgils, who then lived in that monastery. Afterwards, when many of the inhabitants had departed thence, on account of the destruction, he lived a long time in our monastery, and died there. We have thought fit therefore to insert this in our History, that we may admonish the reader of the works of our Lord, how terrible He is in his counsels on the sons of men, lest we should at some time or other indulge in the pleasures of flesh, and dreading the judgment of God too little, fall under his sudden wrath, and either be severely but justly afflicted with temporal losses, or else being more severely tried, be snatched away to eternal perdition.

[1] It would hence appear, that at this time separate cells were assigned to the inmates of monasteries. The thirteenth chapter of the Rule of Isidore provides that all the monks should sleep in one common dormitory; and yet in the first chapter it appoints cells for the brethren, and decrees that they shall be near the church, for their greater ease in assembling for divine service. St. Benedict himself had a cell in which he prayed, Greg. Dial. lib. ii. cap. 11; and Beda had his own *casula*, in which he was wont to pray, and in which, as we learn from Cuthbert, he yielded up his spirit to God.

CHAP. XXVI. [A.D. 684.]—OF THE DEATH OF THE KINGS ECGFRID AND HLOTHERI.

§ 340. IN the year of our Lord's incarnation 684, Ecgfrid, king of the Northumbrians, sending Berct, his general, with an army, into Ireland,[1] miserably wasted that harmless nation, which had always been most friendly to the English; insomuch that the hand of the enemy spared not even the churches or monasteries. Those islanders, to the utmost of their power, repelled force with force, and imploring the assistance of the divine mercy from heaven, prayed long and fervently for vengeance; and though such as curse cannot possess the kingdom of God, it is believed that those who were justly cursed on account of their impiety shall soon suffer the penalty of their guilt from the avenging hand of God: for the very next year, [A.D. 685,] that same king, rashly leading his army to ravage the province of the Picts, much against the advice of his friends, and particularly of Cudberct,[2] of blessed memory, who had been lately ordained bishop, the enemy pretended that they fled, and the king being drawn into the straits of inaccessible mountains, was slain with the greatest part of the forces which he had taken with him, on the thirteenth of the kalends of June [20th May], in the fortieth year of his age, and the fifteenth of his reign. His friends, as I have said, advised him not to engage in this war; but he having the year before refused to listen to the most reverend father Ecgberct, advising him not to attack Scotland [Ireland], which did him no harm, it was laid upon him as a punishment for his sin, that he should not now regard those who would have prevented his death.

§ 341. From that time the hopes and strength of the English crown "began to waver and to retrograde;" for the Picts recovered their own lands, which had been held by the Angles and the Scots that were in Britain, and some of the Britons regained their liberty, which they have now enjoyed for about forty-six[3] years. Among the many English that then either fell by the sword, or were made slaves, or escaped by flight out of the country of the Picts, the most reverend man of God, Trumuini,[4] who had received the bishopric over them, withdrew with his people that were in the monastery of Aebbercurnig,[5] seated in the country of the Angles, but close by the arm of the sea which parts the lands of the Angles and the Picts. Having entrusted them, wheresoever he could, to his friends in the monasteries, he chose his own place of residence in the monastery, which we have so often mentioned, of men and women servants of God, at Streanaeshalch; and there he, with a few of his own people, for several years, led a life in all monastical austerity, not only to his own, but to the benefit of many; and dying there, he was buried

[1] See Ogygia, p. 230, where the time and place of the invasion are specified. It may, perhaps, have been occasioned by the refuge which the Irish had afforded to Alfrid, the illegitimate brother of Ecgfrid, and his successor in the kingdom. See p. 484, note [2].

[2] See the Life of St. Cuthbert, § 45.

[3] Hence we learn that Beda wrote his Ecclesiastical History in the year 731.

[4] Concerning him, see the Acta SS. Feb. ii. 414.

[5] See § 29.

in the church of the blessed Peter the apostle, with the honour due to his life and rank. The royal virgin, Aelbfled, with her mother, Eanfled, whom we have mentioned before,[1] then presided over that monastery; but when the bishop came thither, this devout instructress for God found in him the greatest assistance in governing, and the greatest comfort to herself. Alfrid[2] succeeded Ecgfrid in the throne, being a man most learned in Scripture, said to be brother to the other, and son to king Osuiu: he nobly retrieved the ruined state of the kingdom, though within narrower bounds.

§ 342. In the same year, being the 685th from the incarnation of our Lord, Hlotheri, king of Kent, died, on the eighth of the ides of February [6th Feb.], when he had reigned twelve years after his brother Ecgberct, who had reigned nine[3] years. He was wounded in battle with the South Saxons, whom Edric,[4] the son of Ecgberct, had raised against him, and died during the cure. After him, the same Edric reigned a year and a half. On his death, kings of doubtful title, or foreigners, for some time wasted the kingdom, till the lawful king, Uictred, the son of Ecgberct, being firmly settled in the throne, by his piety and care delivered his nation from foreign invasion.

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CHAP. XXVII. [A.D. 685.]—HOW CUDBERCT, A MAN OF GOD, IS MADE BISHOP; AND HOW HE LIVED AND TAUGHT WHILST STILL IN A MONASTIC LIFE.

§ 343. THE same year that king Ecgfrid departed this life, he (as has been said) caused to be ordained to the bishopric of the church of Lindisfarne, the holy and venerable Cudberct,[5] who had for many years led a solitary life, in great continence of body and mind, in a very small island, called Farne, distant almost nine miles from that same church, in the ocean. From his very childhood he had always been inflamed with the desire of a religious life; but he took upon him the habit and name of a monk when he was a young man. He first entered into the monastery of Mailros, which is on the bank of the river Tweed, and was then governed by the abbat Eata, a man of all others the most meek and simple, who was afterwards made bishop of the church of Hagustald and Lindisfarne, as has been said above,[6] over which monastery at that

[1] See § 322.

[2] In his Life of St. Cuthbert, § 41, Beda states that this Alfrid was the illegitimate brother of Ecgfrid, and here he speaks with reserve as to his pedigree. Lappenberg, however, unhesitatingly assigns him a place in the genealogy of the kings of Bernicia, without questioning his legitimacy. In 1839, the Surtees Society published an early collection of liturgical remains, to which tradition had assigned the title of king Aldfrid's Ritual. Its component parts are examined with great care by Dr. Lingard in the Appendix to his History of the Anglo-Saxon Church, vol. ii. ed. 1845. According to Camden, Aldfrid was buried at Driffield, in Yorkshire (col. 890).

[3] In the Saxon version he is said to have reigned only eight years.

[4] He was the son of Ecgberct, and, therefore, nephew of the deceased king Hlotheri.

[5] Beda having referred his readers to the Life of St. Cuthbert, which he had previously written, the observations which suggest themselves in reference to him are reserved for an edition of that legend, which will be found in the present volume. The greater part of the remainder of this book of the Ecclesiastical History is transcribed from that narrative.

[6] See § 237.

time was placed Boisil, a priest of great virtue and of a prophetic spirit. Cudberct, humbly submitting himself to this man's direction, from him received both the knowledge of the holy Scriptures, and an example of good works.

§ 344. [A.D. 664.] After he had departed to our Lord, Cudberct was placed over that monastery, where he instructed many in regular life, both by his authority as a master, and by the example of his own behaviour. Nor did he afford admonitions and an example of a regular life to his monastery alone, but endeavoured to convert the people round about, far and near, from the life of foolish custom, to the love of heavenly joys; for many profaned the faith which they had received by their wicked actions; and some also, in the time of a mortality, neglecting the sacraments of the faith which they had received, had recourse to the false remedies of idolatry, as if they could have put a stop to the plague sent from God the Creator, by enchantments,[1] spells, or other secrets of the hellish art. In order to correct the error of both sorts, he often went out of the monastery, sometimes on horseback, but oftener on foot, and repaired to the neighbouring towns, where he preached the way of truth to such as were gone astray; which had been also done by Boisil in his time. It was then the custom of the English people, that when a clerk or priest came into the town, they all, at his command, flocked together to hear the Word; they willingly heard what was said, and more willingly practised those things that they could hear or understand. But Cudberct was so skilful an orator, such a power of persuasion had he, and such a brightness appeared in his angelic face, that no man present presumed to conceal from him the most hidden secrets of his heart, but all openly confessed what they had done; because they thought the same guilt could not be concealed from him; and they wiped off the guilt of what they had so confessed with worthy fruits of repentance, as he commanded. He was wont chiefly to resort to those places, and preach in such villages, as being seated at a distance in rough and rugged mountains, were frightful to others to behold, and whose poverty and barbarity rendered them inaccessible to other teachers: nevertheless he, having entirely devoted himself to that pious labour, did so industriously apply himself to polish them with his doctrine, that when he departed out of his monastery, he would often stay a week, sometimes two or three, and occasionally a whole month, before he returned home, continuing among the mountains to allure to heavenly employments that rustic people by his preaching of the Word and by his example.

§ 345. This venerable servant of our Lord, having thus spent many years in the monastery of Mailros, and there become conspicuous by many miracles, his most reverend abbat, Eata, removed him to the isle of Lindisfarne, that he might there also, by the

[1] These remnants of the old Teutonic heathendom are frequently mentioned in the Saxon Laws. See the titles enumerated in the Index to Thorpe's edition, under the word "Superstitions," and the Introductory Essay prefixed to Wright's Biog. Lit., Saxon Period, p. 101. The concluding essay in the first volume of Kemble's "Saxons in England" (8vo. Lond. 1849) may also be consulted with advantage.

authority of a superior and by his own example, instruct the brethren in the observance of regular discipline; for the same reverend father then governed that place also as abbat. For, indeed, from ancient times, the bishop was wont to reside there with his clergy, and the abbat with his monks, who themselves were likewise under the care of the bishop as his own family; because Aedan, who was the first bishop of the place, being himself a monk, coming thither with monks, himself settled the monastic institution there; as the blessed father Augustine is known to have done this before in Kent, the most reverend pope Gregory writing to him, as has been said above,[1] to this effect:—"But in regard that you, my brother, being brought up under monastic rules, are not to live apart from your clergy in the English church, which, by God's assistance, has been lately brought to the faith; you are to follow that course of life which our forefathers did in the time of the primitive church, when none of them said anything that he possessed was his own, but all things were in common among them."

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CHAP. XXVIII. [A.D. 676—687.]—HOW THE SAME PERSON, BEING AN ANCHORITE, BY HIS PRAYERS OBTAINED A SPRING IN A DRY SOIL, AND HAD A CROP FROM SEED SOWN BY HIMSELF OUT OF SEASON.

§ 346. [A.D. 676.] AFTER this, Cudberct, advancing in the merits of his devout intention, proceeded even to the adoption of a hermit's life of solitary contemplation and secret silence, as we have mentioned. But forasmuch as we several years ago wrote enough of his life and virtues, both in heroic verse and prose,[2] it may suffice at present only to mention this, that when he was about to repair to the island, he made this protestation to the brethren, saying, "If it shall please the divine grace to grant me, that I may live in that place by the labour of my hands, I will willingly reside there; but if not, I will, by God's permission, very soon return to you." The place was entirely destitute of water, and unproductive of corn and trees; and being infested by evil spirits, was very ill suited for human habitation; but it became in all respects habitable, at the desire of the man of God; for upon his arrival the wicked spirits withdrew. When he had there, after expelling the enemies, with the assistance of the brethren, himself built a small dwelling, with a wall about it,[3] and the necessary habitations, and an oratory, and a common place of abode, he ordered the brethren to dig a well in the floor of the dwelling, although the ground was very hard and stony, and no hope at all appeared of any spring of water. Having done this upon the faith and the prayers of the servant of God, the next day it was found to be full of water, and to this day affords plenty of its heavenly bounty to all

[1] See § 59.

[2] Bede's prose Life of St. Cuthbert is contained in the present volume, and to it the reader is referred.

[3] "....circumvallante aggere..." It has been usual to render this "... with a trench about it;" but the present version is the only one which can be accepted if we compare this passage with § 30 of the prose Life of St. Cuthbert. An examination of the remains of this cell, and, indeed, the general aspect of the island of Farne, confirm this rendering.

that resort thither. He also desired that all instruments for husbandry might be brought him, and some wheat; and having sown the same at the proper season in the land which he had prepared for it, nothing appeared; neither stalk, nor even so much as a single leaf, sprouted from it by the next summer. Hereupon the brethren visiting him according to custom, he ordered barley to be brought him, in case it were either the nature of that soil, or the will of the Supreme Giver, that such grain should rather grow there. He sowed it in the same field as soon as it was brought him, after the proper time of sowing had passed, and consequently without any likelihood of its coming to fruit; but a plentiful crop immediately came up, and afforded the man of God the means which he had so ardently desired of supporting himself by his own labour.

§ 347. [A.D. 684.] When he had there served God in solitude many years, the mound which encompassed his habitation being so high, that he could from thence see nothing but heaven, to obtain an entrance into which he so ardently aspired, it happened that a great synod was assembled in the presence of king Ecgfrid, near the river Alne, at a place called Ad-tuifyrdi, which signifies "At the two Fords," in which archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, presided; and there Cudberct was, by the unanimous consent of all, chosen bishop of the church of Lindisfarne. They could not, however, persuade him to leave his monastery, though many messengers and letters were sent to him; at last the aforesaid king himself, with the most holy bishop Trumuine, and other religious and great men, sailed over into the island; many also of the brethren of the same isle of Lindisfarne assembled together for the same purpose: they all knelt, they adjured him by our Lord, and besought him, with tears and entreaties, till they drew him, also full of sweet tears, from his retreat, and forced him to the synod. Being arrived there, after much opposition, he was overcome by the unanimous resolution of all present, and bowed his neck to take upon himself the episcopal dignity; being chiefly prevailed upon by mention having been made that Boisil, the servant of God, when he had prophetically foretold all things that were to befal him, had also predicted that he should be a bishop. However, the ordination was not appointed immediately; but after the winter, which was then at hand, it was performed at the Easter festival, in the city of York, and in the presence of the aforesaid king Ecgfrid; seven bishops meeting at the consecration, among whom, Theodore, of blessed memory, was primate. He was first elected to the bishopric of the church of Hagustald, in the place of Tunberct, who had been deposed from the episcopal dignity; but in regard that he chose rather to be placed over the church of Lindisfarne, in which he had lived, it was thought fit that Eata should return to the see of the church of Hagustald, over which he had been first ordained, and that Cudberct should take upon him the government of the church of Lindisfarne.

§ 348. Following the example of the blessed apostles, he became an ornament to the episcopal dignity by his virtuous actions; for he both protected the people committed to his charge, by constant

prayer, and excited them, by most wholesome admonitions, to heavenly practices; and, which is the greatest help to teachers, he first showed in his own behaviour what he taught was to be performed by others; for he was above all things inflamed with the fire of divine charity, modest in the virtue of patience, most diligently intent on devout prayers, and affable to all that came to him for the sake of consolation. He thought it equivalent to praying, that he should afford the infirm brethren the help of his exhortations, well knowing that He who said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," said likewise, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." He was also remarkable for the chastisement of abstinence, and always intent upon heavenly things, through the grace of compunction. And lastly, when he offered up to God the sacrifice of the saving victim, he commended his prayer to God, not with a loud voice, but with tears drawn from the bottom of his heart.

§ 349. [A.D. 687.] Having spent two years in his bishopric, he returned to his island and monastery, being admonished by a divine oracle, that the day of his death (or rather of his entrance into that life which alone is to be called life) was drawing near; as he also, at that time, with his usual simplicity, signified to some persons, though in terms which were somewhat obscure, but which were nevertheless afterwards plainly understood; while to others he declared the same thing openly.

## CHAP. XXIX. [A.D. 687.]—HOW HE, WHEN NOW A BISHOP, FORETOLD TO THE ANCHORITE, HEREBERCT, THAT HIS DEATH WAS AT HAND.

§ 350. THERE was a certain priest, of venerable life, called Hereberct, who had long been united with the man of God in the bonds of spiritual friendship. This man, leading a solitary life in the island of that great lake from which the river Derwent takes its source, was wont to visit him every year, and to receive from him advice respecting his eternal salvation. Hearing that bishop Cudberct was come to the city of Lugubalia, he repaired thither to him, according to custom, being desirous to be still more and more inflamed in heavenly desires through his wholesome admonitions. Whilst they alternately entertained one another with drinking in the delights of the celestial life, the bishop, among other things, said, "Brother Hereberct, remember at this time to ask me all the questions you wish to ask, and say all you wish to say; for after this parting we shall see one another no more in this world. For I am sure that the time of my dissolution is at hand, and I shall speedily put off this my tabernacle." Hearing these words, he fell down at his feet, and shedding tears, with a sigh, said, "I beseech you, by our Lord, not to forsake me; but that you remember your most faithful companion, and entreat the Supreme Goodness that, as we served Him together upon earth, so we may depart together to see his grace in heaven. For you know that I have always endeavoured to live according to your directions, and whatsoever faults I have committed, either through ignorance

or frailty, I have immediately endeavoured to correct, according to the judgment of your will." The bishop applied himself to prayer, and having presently had intimation in the spirit that he had obtained what he asked of the Lord, he said, "Rise, brother, and do not weep, but rejoice greatly, because the goodness of God hath granted what we have desired."

§ 351. The event proved the truth of this promise and prophecy, for after their parting at that time, they no more saw one another in the flesh; but their souls quitting their bodies on one and the same day, that is, on the 13th of the kalends of April [20th March], they were immediately again united in spirit, in the beatific vision, and translated to the heavenly kingdom by the ministry of angels. But Hereberct was first tried by a sickness, through the dispensation of the Lord's goodness, as may be believed, to the end that if he was anything inferior in merit to the blessed Cudberct, the same might be supplied by the chastising pain of a long sickness, that being thus made equal in grace to his intercessor, as he departed out of the body at the very same time with him, so he might be received into the same equal seat of eternal bliss.

§ 352. The most reverend father died in the isle of Farne, earnestly entreating the brethren that he might also be buried in that same place, where he had been God's soldier for a considerable time. However, at length yielding to their entreaties, he consented to be carried back to the isle of Lindisfarne, and there buried in the church. This being done accordingly, the venerable bishop Uilfrid held the episcopal see of that church one year, till such time as a bishop were chosen to be ordained in the room of Cudberct. Afterwards [A.D. 688] Eadberct was ordained, a man renowned for his knowledge in the divine Scriptures, as also for his observance of the divine precepts, and chiefly for almsgiving; so that, according to the law, [Lev. xxvii. 30, 32,] he every year gave the tenth part, not only of four-footed beasts, but even of all corn and fruit, as also of garments to the poor.

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CHAP. XXX. [A.D. 698.]—HOW HIS BODY WAS FOUND UNCORRUPTED AFTER IT HAD BEEN BURIED ELEVEN YEARS; AND HOW HIS SUCCESSOR IN THE BISHOPRIC DEPARTED THIS WORLD NOT LONG AFTER.

§ 353. IN order more fully to show in how much glory the man of the Lord, Cudberct, lived after death, his heavenly life having been before his death signalized by frequent miracles; when he had been buried eleven years, divine providence put it into the minds of the brethren to take up his dry bones, expecting, as is usual with dead bodies, to find all the rest of the body consumed and reduced to dust, and intending to put the same into a new coffin, and to lay them in the same place, but above the pavement, with the honour due to him. They acquainted bishop Eadberct with their design, and he consented to it, and ordered that they should remember to do this on the anniversary of his deposition. They did so, and on opening the grave, found all the body whole,

as if he had been alive, and the joints pliable, much more like one asleep than a dead person; besides, all the vestments in which he was clothed were not only found uncorrupted, but wonderful for their original freshness and beauty. The brethren on seeing this, with much fear hastened to tell the bishop what they had found; he being then in solitude in a place remote from the church, and encompassed by the sea. In this place he always used to spend the time of Lent, and was wont to continue there with great devotion, forty days before the birth of our Lord, in abstinence, prayers, and tears. There also his venerable predecessor, Cudberct, had some time served God in private, before he went to the isle of Farne.

§ 354. They brought him also some part of the garments that had covered his holy body; which presents he thankfully accepted, and gladly listening to the miracles, he with wonderful affection kissed those garments, as if they had been still upon the father's body, and said, "Let the body be put into new garments in the place of these which you have brought, and so lay it into the coffin you have provided. For I am very certain that the place will not long remain empty, having been sanctified with so many miracles of heavenly grace; and how happy is that man to whom our Lord, the Author and Giver of all bliss, shall grant the privilege of lying in the same!" The bishop having said this and much more, with many tears and great compunction, and with a faltering tongue, the brethren did as he had commanded them; and when they had dressed the body in new garments, and laid it in a new coffin, they placed it on the pavement of the sanctuary. Soon after, God's beloved bishop, Eadberct, fell grievously sick, and his disease daily increasing, and growing more and more oppressive, in a short time, that is, on the day before the nones of May [6th May], he also departed to the Lord, and they laid his body in the grave of the blessed father Cudberct, placing over it the coffin, in which they had placed the uncorrupted remains of that father. The miracles of healing sometimes wrought in that place testify the merits of them both; of some of which we before preserved the memory in the book of his Life, and have thought fit to add some more in this History, which have lately come to our knowledge.

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### Chap. XXXI.—Of one that was cured of a Palsy at his Tomb.

§ 355. There was in that same monastery a brother whose name was Badudegn, who had for a considerable time waited upon the guests, and who is still living, having the testimony of all the brethren and strangers resorting thither, of being a man of much piety and religion, and serving the office assigned to him only for the sake of the heavenly reward. This man, having on a certain day washed the mantles or garments which he used in the guest-house, in the sea, was returning home, when on a sudden, about half way, he was seized with a sudden distemper in his body, insomuch that he fell down, and having lain on the ground some time, he could scarcely

rise again. When at last he got up, he felt that one-half of his body, from the head to the foot, was struck with palsy; and with much difficulty he reached home by the help of a staff. The disorder increased by degrees, and as night approached, became still worse, so that when day returned he could scarcely rise or walk alone. In this weak condition, a good thought came into his mind, which was to go to the church, the best way he could, to the tomb of the reverend father Cudberct, and there, on his knees, to beg of the divine goodness either to be delivered from that disease, if it were for his good, or if God's grace had ordained him longer to lie under the same for his punishment, that he might bear the pain with patience and a composed mind.

§ 356. He did according to his intention, and supporting his weak limbs with a staff, entered the church, and prostrating himself before the body of the man of God, he, with pious earnestness, prayed that through his aid our Lord might be propitious to him. In the midst of his prayers, he fell as it were into a sleep, and, as he was afterwards wont to relate, felt a large and broad hand touch that part of his head where the pain lay; and by that touch, all the part of his body which had been affected with the distemper was gradually delivered from the weakness, and restored to health down to his feet. He then awoke, and rose up in perfect health, and afterwards, returning thanks to God for his recovery, told the brethren what had happened to him; and to the joy of them all, he returned the more zealously, as if chastened by his affliction, to the service which he was wont before so carefully to perform. The very garments, moreover, which had clothed Cudberct's body, dedicated to God, either whilst living, or after he was dead, were not exempt from the virtue of performing cures, as may be seen in the book of his Life and miracles, by such as shall read it.

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### Chap. XXXII. [A.D. 728.]—Of one who was cured recently of a Disease in his Eye at these Relics.

§ 357. Nor is that cure to be passed over in silence, which was performed by his relics three years ago, and was told me by the brother himself on whom it was wrought. It happened in the monastery, which, being built near the river Dacore, has taken its name from the same, over which, at that time, the religious Suidberct presided as abbat. In that monastery was a certain youth whose eyelid had a great swelling on it, which growing daily, threatened the loss of the eye. The surgeons applied their medical fomentations to ripen it, but in vain. Some said it ought to be cut off; others opposed it, for fear of worse consequences. The said brother having long laboured under this malady, and seeing no human means likely to save his eye, but that, on the contrary, it daily grew worse, was cured on a sudden, through the grace of the divine goodness, by the relics of the most holy father, Cudberct; for the brethren, finding his body uncorrupted, after having been many years buried, took some part of the hair, which they might,

at the request of friends, give or show, in testimony of the miracle, after the manner of relics.

§ 358. One of the priests of that monastery, named Thruidred, who is now abbat there, had a small part of these relics in his possession at that time. One day, having entered the church, he opened the box of relics, that he might give some part of them to a friend that begged it, and it happened that the youth who had the diseased eye was then in the church; the priest, having given his friend as much as he thought fit, delivered the rest to the youth to put it into its place. Having received the hairs of the saint's head, by some fortunate impulse, he applied them to the sore eyelid, and endeavoured for some time, by the application of them, to soften and abate the swelling. Having done this, he again replaced the relics in the box, as he had been ordered, believing that his eye would soon be cured by the hairs of the man of God, which had touched it; nor did his faith disappoint him. It was then, as he was wont to relate it, about the second hour of the day; but he, being intent and busy about other things which belonged to that day, about the sixth hour of the same, touching his eye on a sudden, he found it as sound with the lid, as if there never had been any swelling or deformity on it.

## BOOK V.

CHAP. I. [A.D. 687.]—HOW OIDILUALD, SUCCESSOR TO CUDBERCT, LEADING THE LIFE OF A HERMIT, CALMED A TEMPEST BY PRAYER, WHEN THE BRETHREN WERE IN DANGER AT SEA.

§ 359. THE venerable Oidiluald, who had received the priesthood in the monastery which is called "Inhrypum," and had, by actions worthy of the same, sanctified his holy office, succeeded the man of God, Cudberct, in the exercise of a solitary life, who had practised the same before he was bishop, in the isle of Farne. For the more certain demonstration of the life which he led, and his merit, I will relate one miracle of his, which was told me by one of the brethren for and on whom the same was wrought; namely, Gudfrid, the venerable servant and priest of Christ, who afterwards, as abbat, presided over the brethren of the same church of Lindisfarne, in which he had been educated.

§ 360. "I came," says he, "to the island of Farne, with two others of the brethren, to speak with the most reverend father Oidiluald.[1] Having been refreshed with his discourse, and asked his blessing, as we were returning home, on a sudden, when we were in the midst of the sea, the fair weather which was wafting us over was checked, and there ensued so great and violent a tempest, that neither the sails nor oars were of any use to us, nor had we

[1] Beda here employs his Northumbrian spelling; Alfred's version gives the more generally received West-Saxon form of Ethelwald. Concerning this hermit see the Acta SS. Mar. iii. 463.

anything to expect but death. After long struggling with the wind and waves to no effect, we looked behind us to see whether it were practicable by an effort at least to recover the island from whence we came; but we found ourselves on all sides so enveloped in the storm, that there was for us no hope of escaping. But looking out as far as we could see, we observed, on the island of Farne, father Oidiluald, the most beloved of God, who had come out of his cell to watch our course; for, hearing the noise of the storm and the raging of the sea, he had come out to see what would happen to us. When he beheld us in distress and despair, he bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in prayer for our life and safety; upon the completion of which, the swelling sea was calmed, so that the violence of the storm ceased on all sides, and a fair wind attended us over the smooth waves even to the very shore. When we had landed, and had dragged upon the shore out of the sea our small vessel, the storm, which had ceased a short time for our sake, immediately returned, and raged continually during the whole day; so that it plainly appeared that the brief cessation of the storm had been granted from heaven at the request of the man of God, in order that we might escape."

§ 361. [A.D. 699.] The man of God remained in the isle of Farne twelve years, and died there; but was buried in the church of the blessed apostle Peter, in the isle of Lindisfarne, beside the bodies of the aforesaid bishops. These things happened in the days of king Aldfrid, who ruled the nation of the Northumbrians eighteen years after his brother Ecgfrid.

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### Chap. II. [A.D. 685.]—How Bishop John cured a Man dumb and afflicted with scurvy by blessing him.

§ 362. In the beginning of the aforesaid reign, bishop Eata died, and was succeeded in the prelacy of the church of Hagustald by John,[1] a holy man, of whom those that familiarly knew him are wont to tell many miracles; and more particularly, the most reverend Berthun, a man of undoubted veracity, and once his deacon, now abbat of the monastery called Inderauuda,[2] that is, in the wood of the Deiri: some of which miracles we have thought fit to transmit to posterity. There is a certain building[3] in a retired situation, and enclosed by a narrow wood and a trench, not far from the church of Hagustald, that is about a mile and a half from it, and separated from it by the river Tyne, having a burying-place dedicated to St. Michael the archangel, where the man of God used frequently, whenever a convenient opportunity offered, and particularly in Lent, to reside with a few companions, that he might

[1] The life and miracles of John of Beverley are detailed at considerable length by Folchard, a monk of Canterbury, whose work may be found in the Acta SS. mens. Maii, ii. 168. See also Wright's Biog., Saxon Period, p. 512.

[2] It was afterwards called Beverley, of which this Berthun, the disciple of John of Beverley, was the first abbot. See Acta SS. Maii, iii. 503.

[3] This "mansio," with its oratory and churchyard, was situated on an eminence near the river Tyne, named Earneshow (*i.e.* the mount of the eagle). See Richard of Hexham, ap. Decem Script. col. 291; Stubbes, col. 1692. In the life given in the Acta SS. it is incorrectly printed "Carnesboc."

devote himself to undisturbed prayers and reading. Being come thither once at the beginning of Lent, to stay, he commanded his followers to find out some poor person labouring under any grievous infirmity, or want, whom he might keep with him during those days, by way of alms; for so he was always used to do.

§ 363. There was in a village not far off, a certain dumb youth, known to the bishop, for he often used to come into his presence to receive alms, and had never been able to speak one single word. Besides, he had so much scurf and scabs on his head, that no hair ever grew on the top of it, but only some rugged hairs in a circle round about. The bishop caused this young man to be brought, and a little cottage to be made for him within the enclosure of the dwelling, in which he might reside, and receive a daily allowance from himself. When the first week of Lent was over, the next Sunday he caused the poor man to come in to him, and ordered him to put his tongue out of his mouth and show it him; then laying hold of his chin, he made the sign of the holy cross on his tongue, directing him when it was so signed, to draw it back into his mouth and to speak. "Pronounce some word," said he; "say 'Gae,'" which in the language of the Angles is the word of affirming and consenting, that is, Yes. The youth's tongue was immediately loosed, and he said what he was ordered. The bishop then pronouncing the names of the letters, directed him to say A; he did so; and afterwards B, which he also did. When he had named all the letters after the bishop, the latter proceeded to pronounce syllables and words, which being also repeated by him, he commanded him to utter longer sentences, and he did so. Nor did he cease all that day and the next night, as long as he could keep awake, as those who were present relate, to talk something, and to express his private thoughts and will to others, which he could never do before; after the manner of that cripple, who, being healed by the apostles Peter and John, stood up leaping, and walked, and went with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising the Lord, rejoicing to have the use of his feet, of which he had so long been deprived. The bishop, rejoicing at his recovery [of speech], ordered the physician to take in hand the cure of his scurfed head. He did so, and with the help of the bishop's blessing and prayers, a good head of hair grew as the skin was healed. Thus the youth obtained a good aspect, a ready utterance, and a beautiful head of hair, whereas before he had been deformed, poor, and dumb. Thus rejoicing at his recovery, the bishop offered to keep him in his family, but he rather chose to return home.

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### Chap. III. [A.D. 686.]—How the same Bishop, by his Prayers, healed a sick Maiden.

§ 364. The same Berethun told another miracle performed by the same bishop. When the most reverend Uilfrid, after a long banishment, was admitted to the bishopric of the church of Hagustald, and the aforesaid John, upon the death of Bosa, a man of great sanctity and humility, was, in his place, appointed bishop of

York, he came, once upon a time, to the monastery of virgins, at the place called Vetadun,[1] where the abbess Heriburg then presided. "When we were come thither," said he, "and had been received with great joy by all, the abbess told us, that one of the virgins, who was her daughter according to the flesh, laboured under a very grievous distemper, having been lately bled[2] in the arm, and whilst she was engaged in study, was seized with a sudden violent pain, which increased so that the wounded arm became worse, and so much swelled, that it could scarce be grasped with both hands; and thus being confined to her bed, through excess of pain, she seemed about to die very soon. The abbess entreated the bishop that he would vouchsafe to go in and give her his blessing; for that she believed she would be the better for his blessing or if he touched her. He asked when the maiden had been bled? and being told that it was on the fourth day of the moon, said, 'You did very indiscreetly and unskilfully to bleed her on the fourth day of the moon; for I remember that archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, said, that bleeding at that time was very dangerous, when the light of the moon and the tide of the ocean is increasing; and what can I do to the girl if she is like to die?'

§ 365. "But she still earnestly entreated for her daughter, whom she dearly loved, and designed to make abbess in her stead; and at last she prevailed with him to go in to her. He accordingly went in, taking me with him, to the virgin, who lay, as I said, in great anguish; and her arm was so much swollen that no power of bending remained in the elbow; the bishop stood and said a prayer over her, and having given his blessing, went out. Afterwards, as we were sitting at table, at the usual hour, some one came in and called me out, saying, 'Quoenburg' (that was the virgin's name) 'desires you will immediately go back to her.' I did so, and as I entered, I perceived her countenance more cheerful, and like one in perfect health. Having seated myself down by her, she said, 'Would you like me to ask for something to drink?'—'Yes,' said I, 'and am very glad if you can.' When the cup was brought, and we had both drunk, she said, 'As soon as the bishop had said the prayer, and given me his blessing, and had gone out, I immediately began to mend; and though I have not yet recovered my former strength, yet all the pain is quite gone from my arm, where it was most intense, and from all my body, as if the bishop had carried it away with him; though the swelling of the arm still seems to remain.' When we departed from thence, the cure of the pain in her limbs was followed by the assuaging of the fearful swelling; and the virgin being thus delivered from torture and death, returned praise to our Lord and Saviour, with his other servants who were there."

[1] Probably Watton, in Yorkshire. See Dugd. Monast. ii. 798; Ailred. Rievall. ap. Decem Script. col. 415.

[2] An accident arising (apparently from a punctured artery) from the system by which both monks and nuns were subjected to periodical blood-letting, illustrations of which may be seen in Convent. Aquisgran. cap. xi. ap. Labb. Concil. vii. 1508, Stat. Ordinis Carthus. ap. Dugd. Monast. i. 956. On the state of medical science, in reference to this usage, see Wright's Biog. Brit. Liter., Saxon Period, Introd. p. 100.

CHAP. IV. [A.D. 685.]—HOW THE SAME BISHOP HEALED AN EARL'S WIFE THAT WAS SICK, WITH HOLY WATER.

§ 366. THE same abbat related another miracle, similar to the former, of the aforesaid bishop. "Not very far distant from our monastery, that is, about almost two miles off,[1] was the country-house of one Puch,[2] an earl, whose wife had languished near forty days under a very acute disease, insomuch that for three weeks she could not be carried out of the room where she lay. It happened that the man of God was, at that time, invited thither by the same earl, to consecrate a church; and when the church was dedicated, the earl desired him to dine at his house. The bishop declined, saying that he must return to the monastery, which was very near. The other, pressing him more earnestly, vowed he would also give alms to the poor, if the bishop would condescend that day to enter his house, and break his fast. I joined my entreaties to his, promising in like manner that I would give alms for the relief of the poor, if he would go and dine at the earl's house, and give his blessing. Having after some delay, and with much difficulty, prevailed, we went in to dine. The bishop had sent to the woman that lay sick some of the holy water[3] which he had consecrated for the dedication of the church, by one of the brethren that went along with me; ordering him to give her some to taste, and to wash the place where her greatest pain was with some of the same water. This being done, the woman immediately got up in health, and perceiving that she had not only been delivered from her tedious disease, but at the same time had recovered the strength which she had lost, she presented the cup to the bishop and to us, and continued serving us with drink, as she had begun, till dinner was over; following the example of the blessed Peter's mother-in-law, who, having been sick of a burning fever, arose at the touch of our Lord's hand, and having at once received health and strength, ministered to them." [Matt. viii. 14.]

CHAP. V. [A.D. 686.]—HOW THE SAME BISHOP RECOVERED ONE OF THE EARL'S SERVANTS FROM DEATH.

§ 367. AT another time also, being called to dedicate earl Addi's[4] church, when he had performed that duty, he was entreated by the same earl to go in to one of his servants, who lay dangerously ill, and having lost the use of all his limbs, seemed to

[1] In Felchard's Life of St. John of Beverley, § 13, this country-house is said to have been at South Burton. See Acta SS. mens. Maii, ii. 170.

[2] His daughter Yolfrida (?) became a nun at Beverley, and died 3d March, 742; Monast. Anglic. i. 170, where it is also stated that Puch gave the manor of Walkington to Beverley.

[3] In the pontifical of Egbert, archbishop of York, is a form for the dedication of a church, in which the bishop is required to bless salt and water, wherewith to sprinkle the altar and the walls. See the extract in Martene, de Antiq. Ecclesiæ Ritibus, iii. 252, ed. 1702; Gage-Rokewood, Ordo ad Dedic. Eccl. ap. Archæolog.

[4] The anonymous Life of John of Beverley (of which an abstract, made by Leland, is printed in Dugdale's Monasticon, i. 170) states that this Addi was earl of North Burton, and that he gave that place, together with the advowson of its church, to Beverley.

be just at the point of death; and indeed the coffin had then been provided in which to bury him. The earl urged his entreaties with tears, earnestly requesting that he would go in and pray for him, because his life was of great consequence to him; and he believed that if the bishop would lay his hand upon him and give him his blessing, he would soon amend. The bishop went in, and saw him in a dying condition, and the coffin by his side in which he was to be placed for burial, whilst all that were present were sorrowing. He said the prayer, blessed him, and on going out, as is the usual expression of comforters, said, "May you soon recover." Afterwards, when they were sitting at table, the lad sent to his lord, to desire he would let him have a cup of wine, because he was thirsty. The earl, rejoicing that he could drink, sent him a cup of wine, blessed by the bishop; which as soon as he had drunk, he immediately got up, and shaking off his late infirmity, dressed himself, and going in to the bishop, saluted him and the other guests, saying that he also would be glad to eat and be merry with them. They ordered him to sit down with them at the entertainment, greatly rejoicing at his recovery. He sat down, ate, drank, and was merry, as if he had been one of the company; and living many years after, continued in the same state of health. The aforesaid abbat says this miracle was not wrought in his presence, but that he had it from those who were there.

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CHAP. VI. [A.D. 685.]—HOW, BY HIS PRAYERS AND BLESSING, HE DELIVERED FROM DEATH ONE OF HIS CLERKS, WHO HAD BRUISED HIMSELF BY A FALL.

§ 368. NOR do I think that this further miracle, which Herebald, the servant of Christ, was wont to say was wrought upon himself, is to be passed over in silence. He was then one of that bishop's clergy, but now presides as abbat in the monastery at the mouth of the river Tyne. "Being present," said he, "and very well acquainted with his course of life, I found it to be in all respects worthy of a bishop, as far as it is lawful for men to judge; but I have known by the experience of many others, and more particularly by my own, how great his merit was before Him who is the Judge of the heart; having been by his prayer and blessing brought back, I may say, from the gates of death to the way of life. For when, in the prime of my youth, I lived among his clergy, applying myself to reading and singing, but not yet having altogether withdrawn my heart from youthful pleasures, it happened one day that, as we were travelling with him, we came into a plain and open road, well adapted for racing our horses. The young men that were with him, and particularly those of the laity, began to entreat the bishop to give them leave to gallop, and thus make trial of the goodness of their horses. He at first refused, saying that it was an idle request; but at last, being prevailed on by the unanimous desire of so many, 'Do so,' said he, 'if you will, but let Herebald have no part at all in the trial.' I earnestly prayed that I might have leave to strive with the rest, for I relied on an excellent horse which he had given me, but I could not by any means obtain my request.

§ 369. "When they had several times galloped backwards and forwards, the bishop and I looking on, my wanton humour prevailed, and I could no longer refrain, but though he forbade me, I mingled myself in among them, and began to ride at full speed; at which I heard him call after me, with a groan, 'Alas! how much you grieve me by riding after that manner.' Though I heard him, I went on against his command; but immediately the fiery horse, taking a great leap over a hollow place in the course, I fell, and entirely lost all sense and motion, as if I had been dead. For there was in that place a stone, level with the ground, covered with only a thin coating of turf, and no other stone was to be found in all that plain; and it happened, as a punishment for the sin of my disobedience, either by chance, or rather by divine providence so ordering it, that my head and hand, which in falling I had placed under my head, hit upon that stone, so that my thumb was broken and the sutures of my skull loosened, and I lay, as I said, like one dead. And because I could not be moved, they stretched over me a tent for me to lie in. It was about the seventh hour of the day; and having lain still, and as it were dead, from that time till the evening, I then revived a little, and was carried home by my companions, but lay speechless all the night, vomiting blood, because my intestines were ruptured within me by the fall. The bishop was very much grieved at my misfortune, and expected my death, for he loved me with an extraordinary affection. Nor would he stay that night, as he was wont, among his clergy; but spent it all in watching and prayer alone, imploring the divine goodness, as I imagine, for my recovery. Coming to me in the morning, very early, and having said a prayer over me, he called me by my name, and as it were waking me out of a heavy sleep, asked whether I knew who it was that spoke to me. I opened my eyes and said, 'I do; you are my beloved bishop.'—'Can you live?' said he. I answered, 'I may, through your prayers, if it shall please the Lord.'

§ 370. "He then laid his hand on my head, with the words of blessing, and returned to prayer; and when he came again to see me, in a short time, he found me sitting and able to talk; and, being admonished by divine instinct, as it soon appeared, he began to ask me whether I knew for certain that I had been baptized? I answered that I knew beyond all doubt that I had been washed in the font of salvation, to the remission of my sins, and I named the priest by whom I knew myself to have been baptized. He replied, 'If you were baptized by that priest, your baptism is not perfect; for I know him, and that having been ordained priest, he could not, by reason of the dulness of his understanding, learn the ministry of catechising and baptizing; for which reason I myself have commanded him altogether to desist from his presumptuous exercising of the ministry, which he could not rightly perform.' This said, he himself took care to catechise me at that very time; and it happened that as he blew[1] upon my face, I presently found

[1] Allusion is here made to the rite of exsufflation which formed a part of the early baptismal service, respecting which the reader may consult Martene, De Antiq. Eccl. Ritibus, i. 32.

myself better. He called the surgeon, and ordered him to close and bind up my skull where it had been loosened; and having then received his blessing, I was so much better that I mounted on horseback the next day, and travelled with him to another place; and being soon after perfectly recovered, I was sprinkled with the life-giving water."

§ 371. [A.D. 721.] He continued in the episcopate during thirty-three years,[1] and then ascending to the heavenly kingdom, was buried in St. Peter's Porch, in his own monastery, called "In silva Derorum," in the year from our Lord's incarnation 721. For having, by his great age, become unable to govern his bishopric, he ordained Uilfrid, his priest, to the see of the church of York, and retired to the aforesaid monastery, and there ended his days in holy conversation.

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CHAP. VII. [A.D. 688, 689.]—HOW CAEDUALLA, KING OF THE WEST SAXONS, WENT TO ROME TO BE BAPTIZED; AND HOW HIS SUCCESSOR INI ALSO DEVOUTLY REPAIRED TO THE SAME CHURCH OF THE HOLY APOSTLES.

§ 372. IN the third year of the reign of Aldfrid, Caedualla, king of the West Saxons, after having most powerfully governed his nation two years, quitted[2] his rule for the sake of our Lord and his everlasting kingdom, and went to Rome, being desirous to obtain the peculiar honour of being washed in the font of baptism within the church of the blessed apostles, for he had learned that in baptism alone, the entrance into heaven is opened to mankind; and he hoped at the same time, that laying down the flesh, as soon as baptized, he, being cleansed, should immediately pass to the eternal joys of heaven; both which things, by the blessing of our Lord, came to pass according as he had conceived in his mind. For coming to Rome, at the time that Sergius[3] was pope, he was baptized on the holy Saturday[4] [10th April] before Easter day, in the year of our Lord's incarnation 689, and being still in his white[5] garments, he fell sick, and was freed from the flesh on the twelfth of

[1] Beda here gives the duration of his episcopate in round numbers, mentioning only the completed number of years; but we learn from Folchard, § 27, that it extended over a period of thirty-three years, eight months, and thirteen days, (Acta SS. mens. Maii, ii. 173,) which, if correct, would throw back his consecration as bishop to 685. Pagi, however, thinks that Folchard has committed an error in these numerals, and that the true date is 686. The process by which he endeavours to establish this conclusion may be seen in his Critica, A.D. 721, § 6. According to this authority John was created bishop in 686, resigned that office in 718, and lived nearly four years in the habit of a monk at Beverley.

[2] Aldfrid's reign over Northumbria is dated from 20th May, 685, the resignation of Caedualla must therefore have occurred after 20th May, 688. Paul Warnefrid, de Gestis Longobard. vi. § 15, says that on his way to Rome, Caedualla visited Cunibert, king of Lombardy, by whom he was joyfully received.

[3] Sergius I. was chosen pope towards the end of 687, and died in 701.

[4] On the discipline of the early church respecting the baptism of catechumens on this day, the reader may consult two treatises by I. J. Homborg, one entitled, "De Paschate Veterum Christ." § 9, 4to, Helmst. 1683; the other, "De Quadragesima Veterum Christ." § 67, 4to, Helmst. 1677; and further, Martene, De Antiq. Ecclesiæ Ritibus, i. 3.

[5] The white garment in which the newly baptized Christian was clothed, was worn by him until the first Sunday after Easter, which was in consequence called "Dominica in Albis." J. Musæus, De Ritibus Baptismalibus, § 49, 4to, Jenæ (1674); Martene, De Antiq. Ecclesiæ Ritibus, i. 138, 139.

the kalends of May [20th April], and was associated with the blessed in heaven. At his baptism, the aforesaid pope had given him the name of Peter, to the end that he might be also united in name to the most blessed chief of the apostles, to whose most holy body his pious love had brought him from the utmost bounds of the earth. He was likewise buried in his church, and by the pope's command an epitaph was written on his tomb, wherein the memory of his devotion might be preserved for ever, and the readers or hearers might be inflamed with religious desire by the example of what he had done.

The epitaph[1] was this:—

High state and place, kindred, a wealthy crown,
Triumphs, and spoils obtain'd in high renown,
Nobles, and cities wall'd, to guard his state,
High palaces, and his familiar seat,
Whatever honours his own virtue gain'd,
Or those his great forefathers had obtain'd,
The strong-arm'd Caedual, from high heaven inspired,
For love of heaven hath left, and here retired;
Peter to see, and Peter's sacred chair,
The royal pilgrim travell'd from afar,
Here to imbibe pure draughts from his clear stream,
And share the influence of his heavenly beam;
Here for the glories of a future claim,
Converted, changed his first and barbarous name.
And following Peter's rule, he from his Lord
Took the same name at father Sergius' word,
At the pure font of baptism by Christ's grace,
Hath washed away of former sin the trace.
Great was his faith, but greater God's decree,
Whose secret counsels mortal cannot see:
Safe came he, from far Britain, o'er the sea,
Rome to behold, in her old majesty,
And mystic presents offer'd on his knee.
Now in the grave his fleshy members lie,
His soul, amid Christ's flock, ascends the sky.
Sure wise was he to lay his sceptre down,
And gain in heaven above a lasting crown.

Here was deposited Caedual, called also Peter, king of the Saxons, on the twelfth day of the kalends of May [20th April], the second indiction. He lived about thirty years, [and died] in the reign of the most pious emperor, Justinian, in the fourth year of his consulship, in the second year of the pontificate of our apostolic lord, pope Sergius.

§ 373. When Caedualla went to Rome, Ini[2] succeeded him in the kingdom, being of the blood royal; and having reigned thirty-

[1] Other copies of these lines may be found in the Harleian MSS. 3685, and in a MS. in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, R. v. 33, which formerly belonged to Glastonbury, (to which monastery Caedualla had been a benefactor, Monast. Anglic. i. 9, 12;) but the variations furnished by these MSS. are of no great moment. Of greater value is the copy of this epitaph given by Fabretti in his "Antiquæ Inscriptiones," No. 463, p. 735, taken from the original stone, which was found in the church of St. Peter at Rome. It is satisfactory to know that it agrees closely with the text furnished by Beda, the variations between the two not being of such a character as to affect the sense.

[2] Concerning Ini, of Wessex, see Acta SS. mens. Feb. i. 905; Mabill. Acta SS. Ord. S. Bened. III. i. 462. The position which he occupied in the pedigree of the royal family of Wessex may be seen on a reference to the genealogical table at the end of the first volume of Lappenberg's History of the Anglo-Saxons. Since he succeeded to the throne in 688, his journey to Rome must have occurred in 725, or 726 at the latest, and cannot be referred to 728, as in the Saxon Chronicle and Florence of Worcester; although it is probable that these entries have reference rather to the date of his death than of his abdication.

seven years over that nation, he also gave[1] up the kingdom in like manner to younger persons, and went to Rome, to visit the shrine of the blessed apostles, at the time when Gregory[2] was pope, being desirous to spend some time of his pilgrimage upon earth in the neighbourhood of holy places, that he might be more easily received by the saints into heaven. The same thing, about the same time, was done by crowds[3] of the English nation, noble and ignoble, laity and clergy, men and women.

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CHAP. VIII. [A.D. 690.]—HOW, ARCHBISHOP THEODORE BEING DEAD, BERCTUALD SUCCEEDS HIM AS ARCHBISHOP, AND, AMONG MANY OTHERS WHOM HE ORDAINED, HE MADE TOBIAS, A MOST LEARNED MAN, BISHOP OF THE CHURCH OF ROCHESTER.

§ 374. IN the year after that in which Caedualla died at Rome, that is, in the year 690 after the incarnation of our Lord, archbishop Theodore,[4] of blessed memory, departed this life, old and full of days, for he was eighty-eight years of age; which number of years he had been wont long before to foretel to his friends that he should live, the same having been revealed to him in a dream. He held the bishopric twenty-two years, and was buried in St. Peter's church, where all the bodies of the bishops of Canterbury are buried.[5] Of whom, as well as of his companions, of the same degree, it may rightly and truly be said, that their bodies are interred in peace, and their names shall live from generation to generation. For to say all in few words, the English churches made greater spiritual advancement during the time of his pontificate, than ever they could do before. His person, life, age, and death, are openly and plainly described to all that resort thither, by the epitaph on his tomb, consisting of thirty-four heroic verses. The first whereof are these:—

'Here rests famed Theodore, a Grecian name,
Who had o'er England an archbishop's claim;
Happy and bless'd, industriously he wrought,
And wholesome precepts to his scholars taught.

The last four are as follow:—

And now it was September's nineteenth day,
When, bursting from its ligaments of clay,
His spirit rose to its eternal rest,
And joined in heaven the chorus of the blest.

§ 375. [A.D. 692.] Berctuald[6] succeeded Theodore in the bishopric, having been abbat[7] of the monastery of Racuulf, which

[1] Malmesbury gives a long account of the measures adopted by queen Ethelberga for the accomplishment of this object.

[2] Namely, Pope Gregory the Second.

[3] See Smith (bishop of Chalcedon), Flores Hist. Eccl. Angl. p. 162, (fol. Paris. 1654,) for a list of these persons to whom Beda here alludes.

[4] The chief particulars respecting Theodore's pontificate may be seen in Mabill. Acta SS. Ord. S. Bened. ii. 985; Acta SS. mens. Sept. vi. 55.

[5] The archbishops of Canterbury before Theodore were buried in the northern portico of the church of St. Peter. See § 96. His remains were translated along with those of Augustin in the year 1091. See the Life of Augustin by Gotscelin, Acta SS. Ord. S. Bened. ix. 759.

[6] Many of the MSS. here commence a new chapter.

[7] The monastery of Reculver, in Kent, Monast. Anglic. i. 86. A charter is yet

lies on the north side of the mouth of the river Genlade.[1] He was a man well learned in the Scriptures, and amply instructed in ecclesiastical and monastic discipline, yet not at all to be compared to his predecessor. He was chosen bishop in the year of our Lord's incarnation 692, on the first day of July, Uictred[2] and Suaebhard being kings in Kent; but he was consecrated the next year, on Sunday the third of the kalends of July [29th June], by Goduin,[3] metropolitan bishop of Gaul, and was enthroned on Sunday, the day before the kalends of September [31st August].

Among the many bishops whom he ordained was Tobias, a man learned in the Latin, Greek, and Saxon tongues, otherwise also possessing much erudition, whom he consecrated in the stead of Gebmund,[4] bishop of the church of Rochester, deceased.

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CHAP. IX. [A.D. 689.]—HOW ECGBERCT, A HOLY MAN, WOULD HAVE GONE INTO GERMANY TO PREACH, BUT COULD NOT; HOW UICTBERCT WENT, BUT HE MEETING WITH NO SUCCESS, RETURNED INTO IRELAND, FROM WHENCE HE CAME.

§ 376. At that time the venerable servant of Christ, and priest, Ecgberct,[5]—whom I cannot name but with the greatest respect, and who, as was said before,[6] lived a stranger's life in the island of Ireland in order to obtain hereafter a residence in heaven,—proposed to himself to do good to many, by taking upon himself the apostolical work, and preaching the word of God to some of those nations that had not[7] yet heard it; many of which nations he knew there were in Germany, from whom the Angles or Saxons, who now inhabit Britain, are known to have derived their origin; for which reason they are still corruptly called Garmans by the neighbouring nation of the Britons. Such are the Frisians,[8] the Rugins,[9] the Danes, the Huns,[10] the Old Saxons,[11] and

extant, granted by Hlothair, of Kent, to abbot Berctuald, of lands in Thanet, dated at Raculf in May, 679. See Kemble's Cod. Diplom. No. 16.

[1] Now called the Inlade.

[2] Wihtred was son of Ecgberet, king of Kent, (§§ 271, 342,) but it is uncertain who this Suebred was, and how he came to be associated in the government of the kingdom. See Kemble's Cod. Diplom. i. 46.

[3] Although Beda does not specify the see over which this metropolitan presided, yet it is clear that he alludes to Goduin, archbishop of Lyons, whose life is given in the Gallia Christ. iv. 50.

[4] The dates respecting the episcopates of Tobias and Gebmund, like those of most of the early bishops of Rochester, are confused and uncertain.

[5] Concerning his mission the reader may consult the Acta SS. mens. April. iii. 313.

[6] See §§ 241, 242.

[7] It is contended by Gerbert that Beda here overstates his point, (see the treatise of that writer, De Origine et Propagatione Religionis Christianæ in Alemannia, in his Vetus Liturgia Alemann. i. 1, ed. S. Blas 1776,) but a perusal of the Life and Letters of Boniface, or Winfrid, would seem to establish the accuracy of our historian.

[8] The inhabitants of Frisia, of which the capital was Utrecht.

[9] The inhabitants of a district near the Baltic Sea, of which the island of Rugen formed a part; probably Pomerania.

[10] Sometimes called the Avari; their residence was in Pannonia. They were subjugated by Charlemagne.

[11] A nation bordering upon the Frisians, and frequently mentioned in conjunction with them. See Alcuini, Opp. i. 6, etc.

the Boructuarians.[1] There are also in the same parts very many other nations still following pagan rites, to whom the aforesaid soldier of Christ designed to repair, having sailed round Britain, and to try whether he could deliver any of them from Satan, and bring them over to Christ; or if this could not be done, he meditated going to Rome, that he might see and adore the hallowed thresholds of the blessed apostles and martyrs of Christ.

§ 377. But the divine oracles and certain events proceeding from heaven obstructed his performing either of these designs; for when he had made choice of some most courageous companions, fitted to preach the word of God, as being renowned for their courage and learning; when all things necessary were provided for the voyage, there came to him on a certain day, early in the morning, one of the brethren, formerly disciple and servant in Britain to the beloved priest of God, Boisil, when the said Boisil was superior of the monastery of Melrose, under the abbat Eata, as has been said above.[2] This brother told him the vision which had appeared to him that night. "When, after having finished the morning hymns," said he, "I had laid me down[3] in my bed, and was fallen into a light slumber, my former master and loving tutor, Boisil, appeared to me, and asked me whether I knew him. I said, 'I do; you are Boisil.' He answered, 'I am come to bring Ecgberct an answer from our Lord and Saviour, which nevertheless must be delivered to him by you. Tell him, therefore, that he cannot perform the journey which he has undertaken; for it is the will of God that he should rather go to instruct[4] the monasteries of Columba.'" Now Columba was the first teacher of the faith of Christ to the Picts beyond the mountains northward, and the first founder of the monastery in the island Hii, which was for a long time much honoured by many tribes of the Scots and Picts; wherefore this Columba is now by some called Columcelli, the name being compounded from Cella and Columba. Ecgberct, having heard the words of the vision, ordered the brother that had told it him, not to mention it to any other, lest it should happen to be an illusion. However, when he considered of it privately within himself, he was apprehensive that it was real; yet he would not desist from preparing for his voyage to instruct those gentiles.

§ 378. A few days afterwards the aforesaid brother came to him the second time, saying that Boisil had that night again appeared

[1] See the Germania of Tacitus, § 33. The inhabitants of a district on the river Necker, as appears by a comparison of the present passage with the poem of Apollinaris Sidonius (De Gallîis, l. 324), ap. Bouquet, i. 806; or the country between the Rhine and the Weser. Acta SS. mens. Mart. i. 70. The difficulty of identifying the exact locality of this people probably arises from the fact mentioned by Tacitus, namely, that the tribe had been broken up and scattered over the neighbouring districts. The Saxon version throws no light upon the names of these peoples.

[2] See § 343.

[3] From this and a subsequent passage it is obvious that their morning service was commenced at midnight, and that after its completion the monks retired for a short time to rest. See Martene, De Antiq. Monach. Ritibus, lib. i. cap. 1.

[4] It will be remembered that those monasteries founded by Columba differed from those founded by the followers of Augustin on the Roman calculation of Easter and on some other points. See §§ 233—235.

to him after the conclusion of matins, and said, "Why did you tell Ecgberct that which I enjoined you, in so negligent and cold a manner? However, go now and tell him, that whether he will or no, he shall go to Columba's monasteries, because their ploughs do not go straight; and he is to bring them into the right way." Hearing this, Ecgberct again commanded the brother not to reveal the same to any person. Though now assured of the vision, he nevertheless attempted to undertake his intended voyage with the brethren whom I have mentioned. When they had put aboard all that was requisite for so long a voyage, and had waited some days for a fair wind, there arose one night on a sudden so violent a storm, that part of what had been put in the ship was spoiled, and they deserted her, lying on the sea-shore, but surrounded by the water. However, all that belonged to Ecgberct and his companions was saved. Then he, saying, like the prophet, "This[1] tempest has happened upon my account," laid aside the undertaking and was contented to stay at home.

§ 379. [A.D. 690.] However, Uictberct, one of his companions, being famous for his contempt of the world and for his knowledge, —for he had lived many years a stranger in Ireland, leading the life of a hermit in great purity,—took shipping, and arriving in Frisia, preached the Word of salvation for the space of two years successively to that nation, and to its king, Rathbed;[2] but reaped no fruit of all his great labour among his barbarous auditors. Returning then to the beloved place of his peregrination, he gave himself up to our Lord in his wonted repose, and since he could not be profitable to strangers by teaching them the faith, he took care to be the more useful to his own people by the example of his virtues.

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CHAP. X. [A.D. 690.]—HOW UILBRORD, PREACHING IN FRISIA, CONVERTED MANY TO CHRIST; AND HOW HIS TWO COMPANIONS, THE HEWALDS, SUFFERED MARTYRDOM.

§ 380. WHEN the man of God, Ecgberct, perceived that neither he himself was permitted to preach to the gentiles, being withheld, on account of some other advantage to the holy church, concerning which he had been admonished by the divine oracle; nor that Uictberct, when he went into those parts, had met with any success; he nevertheless still attempted to send some holy and industrious men to the work of the Word, among whom was Uilbrord,[3] a man eminent for his merit and rank in the priesthood. They arrived[4] there, twelve in number, and turning aside to Pepin,[5] duke

[1] Jonah i. 12.

[2] Concerning him, see Alcuin's Life of Wilbrord, i. §§ 6, 9, 10, &c.; ap. Mabill. Acta SS. Ord. S. Bened. III. i. 565, *seq.*

[3] A life of Wilbrord, written by Alcuin in A.D. 796, may be seen in the Works of that author, ii. 183, and in the collection cited in the last note.

[4] He arrived there in 690, (not 692, as Smith states,) according to the coeval entry in the margin of a calendar which was preserved at Epternach, concerning which see Calmet's Hist. de Lorraine, iii. 99. A good abstract of Wilbrord's life may be seen in Wright's Biog. Anglo-Sax. p. 250.

[5] Pepin of Heristal. The visit of the missionaries to him arose, probably, from their desire to avail themselves of the great accession of power which he had recently gained by the defeat which he had inflicted upon king Thierry in 687, at the battle of Tertri. See Pagi ad an. § 8.

of the Franks, were graciously received by him; and as he had lately subdued the Hither Frisia, and thence expelled king Rathbed,[1] he sent them thither to preach, supporting them at the same time with his royal authority, that none might molest them at all in their preaching, and bestowing many favours on those who consented to embrace the faith. Thus it came to pass, with the assistance of the divine grace, that in a short time they converted many from idolatry to the faith of Christ.

§ 381. Two other priests of the English nation, who had long lived strangers in Ireland, for the sake of the eternal kingdom, following the example of the former, went into the province of the Old Saxons, to try whether they could there win any to Christ by preaching. They both bore the same name, as they were the same in devotion, Hewald being the name of both, with this distinction, however, that, on account of the difference in their hair, the one was called Hewald the Black, and the other Hewald the White. They were both piously religious, but Hewald the Black was the more learned of the two in the knowledge of the holy scriptures. On entering that province, these men took up their lodging in a certain steward's house, and requested that he would conduct them to his over-lord,[2] for that they had a message, and something to his advantage, to communicate to him. For those Old Saxons have no king,[3] but several over-lords that rule their nation; and when any war happens, they cast lots indifferently, and on whomsoever the lot falls, him they follow and obey as their leader during the war; but as soon as the war is ended, all those over-lords are again equal in power. The steward received and entertained them in his house for some days, promising to send them to his over-lord, as they desired.

§ 382. But the barbarians finding them to be of another religion, by their continual prayer and singing of psalms and hymns, and by their daily offering to God the sacrifice of the saving oblation,—for they had with them sacred vessels and a consecrated table[4] for an altar,—they began to grow jealous of them, lest if they should come into the presence of their over-chief, and converse with him, they should turn him from their gods, and convert him to the new religion of the christian faith; and thus by degrees all their province should change its old worship for a new. Hereupon they, on a sudden, laid hold of them and put them to death; Hewald the White they slew with the swift death of the sword; but the Black they put to a slow and fearful torture, and tore limb from limb,

[1] Concerning this Radbod of Frisia and the incident here mentioned by Beda, see Pagi ad an. 689, § 9.

[2] The Latin word here translated by "over-lord," is "satrapa;" Alfred, in his Anglo-Saxon version, renders it by "ealdorman."

[3] A somewhat similar account of the elective government of the ancient Germans may be gathered from what we read in Tacitus; see his Germania, § 7, and his Annals, § 44.

[4] An early instance of the employment of the portable altar; additional illustrations of which may be seen in Mabill. Act. SS. Ord. S. Bened. III. i. § 5, p. 343; III. ii. § 20, p. 317. The portable altar used by St. Cuthbert was discovered when his tomb was opened in 1828, and may yet be seen in the library of Durham cathedral.

throwing them both into the Rhine when they were dead. The chief whom they had desired to see, hearing of it, was highly incensed, that the strangers who desired to come to him had not been allowed to do so; and therefore he sent and put to death all those peasants and burnt their village. The aforesaid priests and servants of Christ suffered on the fifth of the nones of October [3d Oct. 695].

§ 383. Nor did their martyrdom want the honour of miracles from heaven; for their dead bodies having been cast into the river by the pagans, as has been said, were carried against the current of the running stream for the space of almost forty miles, to the place where their companions were. Moreover, a very great ray of light, reaching up to heaven, shone every night over the place, wherever it might be, at which they had arrived; and this in the sight of the very pagans that had slain them. Moreover, one of them appeared in a vision by night to one of his companions, whose name was Tilmon, a man of illustrious and of noble worldly birth, who from a soldier had become a monk, acquainting him that he might find their bodies in that place where he should see rays of light reaching from heaven to the earth; which happened accordingly. Their bodies being found, were interred with the honour due to martyrs; and the day of their passion, or of their bodies being found, is celebrated in those parts with proper veneration. At length Pepin, the most glorious general of the Franks, understanding these things, caused the bodies to be brought to him, and buried them with much honour in the church of the city of Cologne, near the Rhine. It is reported, that a spring gushed out in the place where they were killed which to this day affords a plentiful stream.[1]

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### Chap. XI. [A.D. 692.]—How the venerable Suidberct in Britain, and Uilbrord at Rome, were ordained Bishops for Frisia.

§ 384. At their first coming into Frisia, as soon as Uilbrord found he had leave given him by the prince to preach there, he made haste to reach Rome, where pope Sergius then presided over the apostolical see, that he might undertake the desired work of preaching the gospel to the gentiles, with his licence and blessing; and hoping to receive of him some relics of the blessed apostles and martyrs of Christ; to the end, that when he had destroyed the idols, and erected churches in the nation to which he preached, he might have the relics of saints at hand to put into them, and having deposited them there, might accordingly dedicate[2] those places to the honour of these saints whose relics they were. He

[1] The Gallican Martyrology abbreviates this passage, specifying Westphalia as the scene of their martyrdom. And it makes this addition, that when Pepin, the glorious duke and general of the French nation, was informed of these things, he caused the sacred bodies of the martyrs to be brought to him, which he buried with great splendour at Cologne, in the collegiate church of St. Cunibert. See Cressy's Church History of Brittany, A.D. 693, § 7.

[2] It was customary at this time to deposit some of the relics of a saint in the church at its dedication, concerning which usage see Martene, De Antiq. Ecclesiæ Ritibus, II. xiii. § 8.

was also desirous there to learn or to receive from thence many other things which so great a work required. Having obtained all that he wanted, he returned to preach.

§ 385. [A.D. 693.] At which time, the brethren who were in Frisia, attending upon the ministry of the Word, chose out of their own number a man, modest of behaviour, and meek of heart, called Suidberct,[1] to be ordained bishop over them. He, being sent into Britain, was consecrated at their request by the most reverend bishop Uilfrid, who, happening to be then driven out of his country, lived in banishment in the regions of the Mercians; for Kent had no bishop at that time, Theodore being dead, and Berctuald, his successor, who had crossed the sea to be ordained, not having returned to his diocese.

§ 386. The said Suidberct, being made bishop, returned from Britain not long after, and went among the nation of the Boructuarians;[2] and by his preaching brought many of them into the way of truth; but the Boructuarians being not long after subdued by the nation of the Old Saxons, those who had received the Word were dispersed abroad; and the bishop himself, along with some others, repaired to Pepin, who, at the request of his wife, Blithryda,[3] gave him a place of residence in a certain island on the Rhine, which, in their tongue, is called "In littore;" where he built a monastery, which his heirs still possess, and for a time led a most continent life; and there he ended his days.

§ 387. [A.D. 696.] When they who went over had spent some years teaching in Frisia, Pepin, with the consent of them all, sent the venerable Uilbrord to Rome, where Sergius was still pope, desiring that he might be ordained archbishop over the nation of the Frisians. Their request was complied with in the year of our Lord's incarnation 696. He was ordained in the church of the holy martyr Cecilia, on the day of her nativity; the pope gave him the name of Clement, and sent him back to his bishopric, fourteen days after his arrival in the city of Rome.

§ 388. Pepin gave him a place for his episcopal see, in his famous castle, which in the ancient language of those people is called Uiltaburg, that is, the town of the Wilts; but, in the Gallican tongue, Trajectum [Utrecht]. The most reverend prelate having built a church there, and preaching the word of faith far and near, drew many from their errors, throughout those regions, and erected several churches and some monasteries. For, not long after, he constituted other bishops also in those parts, from among the number of the brethren who either came with him, or after him, to preach there; some of whom are now departed in our Lord; but Uilbrord himself, surnamed Clement, is still[4] living,

[1] His life is detailed at considerable length in the Acta SS. mens. Mart. i. 67.

[2] See § 376, note [1].

[3] This is the Saxon form of the name Plectrudis, by which she is more generally known. See Mabill. Annal. Bened. xviii. 17, 18.

[4] This was written by Beda in the year 731. The date of Wilbrord's death is uncertain, being ascribed by Mabillon first to A.D. 739, (with whom Pagi agrees,) and afterwards to 741; by Smith to 745, and by Froben to 740. See Alcuini Opera, ii. 192. Another opportunity will be afforded for the examination of this and the other incidents connected with the life of this energetic missionary.

venerable for old age, having been thirty-six years a bishop, and with his whole heart sighing after the rewards of the heavenly life, after the many spiritual conflicts which he has waged in this.

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CHAP. XII. [A.D. 696?]—OF ONE IN THE PROVINCE OF THE NORTHUMBRIANS, WHO ROSE FROM THE DEAD, AND RELATED THE MANY THINGS WHICH HE HAD SEEN, SOME TERRIBLE AND OTHERS DELIGHTFUL.

§ 389. AT this time a memorable miracle, and like to those of former days, was wrought in Britain; for, to the end that the living might be raised up from the death of the soul, a certain person, who had been some time dead, rose again to the life of the body, and related[1] many remarkable things which he had seen; some of which I have thought fit here briefly to notice. There was a master of a family in that district of the Northumbrians which is called "In-cuneningum,"[2] who led a religious life, as did also all his house. This man fell sick, and his disorder daily increasing, being brought to extremity, he died in the beginning of the night; but in the morning early, he came to life again, and suddenly sat up, upon which all those that sat about the body weeping, fled away in great terror; and only his wife, who loved him best, though in great consternation and trembling, remained with him. He, comforting her, said, "Fear not, for I am now truly risen from the death which held me, and am permitted again to live among men; however, I am not to live hereafter as I was wont to live, but from henceforward it must be after a very different manner." Then rising immediately, he repaired to the oratory of the little town, and continuing in prayer till day, immediately divided all his substance into three parts; one whereof he gave to his wife, another to his children, and the third, belonging to himself, he instantly distributed among the poor. Not long after, being freed from the cares of the world, he repaired to the monastery of Melrose, which is almost enclosed by the winding of the river Tweed, and having received the tonsure, he went into a secret dwelling, which the abbat had provided, and there he continued till the day of his death, in such extraordinary contrition of mind and body, that though his tongue had been silent, his life would have declared that he had seen many things either to be dreaded or coveted, of which others knew nothing.

§ 390. This was his account of what he had seen. "He that led me," said he, "had a shining countenance and a bright garment, and we went on silently, as I thought, towards the north-east. Walking onwards, we came to a vale of great breadth and depth, and of infinite length; on the left it appeared full of dreadful flames, the other side was no less intolerable on account of the violent hail and cold snow which were flying and drifting in all directions. Both

[1] A similar legend will be found among the Correspondence of Boniface, to which the reader is referred.

[2] Probably Cunningham, in Scotland, at that time included within the kingdom of Northumbria. See § 395. It is certain that the monks of Melrose had possessions there at a later period. See the Liber de Melrose, i. 72, 74, 4to, Edinb. 1837.

places were full of men's souls, which seemed by turns to be tossed from one side to the other, as it were by the violence of the storm; for when the wretches could no longer endure the excess of heat, they leaped into the middle of the cutting cold; and finding no rest there either, they leaped back again to be burnt in the middle of the unquenchable flames. Now whereas an innumerable multitude of deformed spirits were thus miserably tormented by turns far and near, as far as could be seen, without any intermission, I began to think that this perhaps might be hell, of whose intolerable flames I had often heard talk. My guide, who went before me, answered to my thought, saying, 'Do not believe so, for this is not the hell you imagine.'

§ 391. "When he had conducted me, much frightened with that horrid spectacle, by degrees, to the further end, on a sudden I saw the place begin to grow dusk and to be totally filled with darkness. When we came into it, the darkness, by degrees, grew so thick, that I could see nothing besides it, and the shape and garment of him that led me. As we went on through the shades of night, on a sudden there appeared before us frequent globes of black flames, rising as it were out of a great pit, and falling back again into the same. When I had been conducted thither, my leader suddenly vanished, and left me alone in the midst of darkness and this horrid vision, whilst those same globes of fire, without intermission, at one time flew up, and at another fell back into the bottom of the abyss; and I observed that the tops of all the flames were full of human souls, which, like sparks flying up with smoke, were sometimes thrown on high, and again, when the vapour of the fire ceased, dropped down into the depth below. Moreover, an insufferable stench boiled up along with the vapours, and filled all those dark places. Having stood there a long time in much dread, not knowing what to do, which way to turn, or what end I might expect, on a sudden I heard behind me the noise of a most hideous and wretched lamentation, and at the same time a loud laughing, as of a rude multitude insulting captured enemies. When that noise, growing plainer, came up to me, I observed a crowd of evil spirits dragging the howling and lamenting souls of five human beings into the midst of the darkness, whilst they themselves laughed and rejoiced; among whom, as I could discern, there was one shorn like a clerk, one a layman, and one a woman. The evil spirits that dragged them went down into the midst of that burning pit; and so it happened that, as they went down deeper, I could no longer clearly distinguish between the lamentation of the men and the laughing of the devils, but yet I still had a confused sound in my ears. In the meantime, some of the dark spirits ascended from that flaming abyss, and running forward, beset me on all sides, and much distressed me with their glaring eyes and the stinking fire which proceeded from their mouths and nostrils; and threatened to lay hold on me with burning tongs, which they held in their hands; yet they durst not touch me, though they frightened me. Being thus on all sides enclosed with enemies and blinding darkness, and looking about on every side for assistance, if

any might reach me, for my deliverance, there appeared behind me, on the way that I came, as it were, the brightness of a star shining amidst the darkness; which increased by degrees, and came rapidly towards me: and when it drew near, all those evil spirits, that sought to carry me away with their pincers, dispersed and fled away.

§ 392. "But he, whose approach had put them to flight, was the same being who before had led me; who, then turning towards the path on the right, began to lead me, as it were, towards the south-east, and having soon brought me out of the darkness, conducted me into an atmosphere of clear light. While he thus led me in open day, I saw a vast wall before us, the length and height of which, in every direction, seemed to be altogether boundless. I began to wonder why we should go up to the wall, seeing no door, window, or stair in it. But when we came to the wall, we were forthwith, I know not by what means, on the top of it; and within it was a vast and delightful field, so full of fragrant flowers that the odour of its delightful sweetness immediately dispelled all the stink of the dark furnace, which had pierced me through and through. So great and diffusive was the light in this place, that it seemed to exceed the brightness of the day, or the sun in its meridian height. In this field were innumerable assemblies of men clothed in white, and many companies seated together rejoicing. As he led me through the midst of those happy inhabitants, I began to think that this might, perhaps, be the kingdom of heaven, of which I had often heard so much in sermons. He answered to my thought, saying, 'This is not the kingdom of heaven, as you imagine.'

§ 393. "When in our progress we had passed those mansions of blessed spirits, I discovered before us a much more beautiful light, and therein also heard most sweet voices of persons singing, and so wonderful a fragrance proceeded from the place, that the taste of the other, which I had before thought most delicious, then seemed to me but very indifferent; even as also that extraordinary brightness of the flowery field, compared with this, appeared mean and inconsiderable. When I began to hope we should enter that delightful place, my guide on a sudden stood still; and then turning round, led me back by the way by which we had come.

§ 394. "When we had returned to those joyful mansions of the spirits in white, he said to me, 'Do you know what all these things are which you have seen?' I answered, 'No;' and then he replied, 'That vale you saw so dreadful in its consuming flames and cutting cold, is the place in which the souls of those are tried and punished, who, delaying to confess and amend the crimes which they have committed, at length have recourse to repentance at the very point of death, and so depart from the body; but nevertheless because they, even at their death, confessed and repented, they shall all reach the kingdom of heaven at the day of judgment; but many are relieved before the day of judgment, by the prayers, alms, and fasting of the living, and more especially by the celebration of masses. Moreover, that fiery and stinking pit which you saw, is

the mouth of hell itself, into which whosoever falls shall never be delivered to all eternity. This flowery place, in which you see these most beautiful young people, so joyful and bright, is that into which the souls of those are received who depart from the body in good works, but who are not so perfect as to deserve to be immediately admitted into the kingdom of heaven; yet they shall all, at the day of judgment, see Christ, and enter into the joys of his kingdom; for whosoever are perfect in every word, and deed, and thought, as soon as they depart from the body, immediately enter into the kingdom of heaven; to whose neighbourhood that place belongs where you heard the sound of sweet singing, with the fragrant odour and bright light. But as for you, who are now to return to your body, and live among men again, if you will endeavour carefully to examine your actions, and study to direct your speech and behaviour in righteousness and simplicity, you also shall, after death, have a place of residence among these joyful troops of blessed souls which you see; for when I left you for a while, it was that I might ascertain what was to become of you.' When he had said this to me, I much abhorred returning to my body, being delighted with the sweetness and beauty of the place I beheld, and with the company of those I saw in it. However, I durst not ask my guide any questions; but in the meantime, on a sudden, I knew not how, I found myself alive among men."

§ 395. Now these and other things which this man of God saw, he would not relate indiscriminately to slothful persons and to such as lived negligently; but only to those who, being either terrified with the dread of torments, or delighted with the hopes of eternal joys, would drink in his words to their own advance in piety. In the neighbourhood of his cell lived one Haemgils, a monk, eminent in the rank of the priesthood, which he equalled by his good works; he is still living, and leading a solitary life in the island of Ireland, supporting his declining age with coarse bread and cold water. He often went to that man, and by frequent questioning he heard of him all the particulars of what he had seen when separated from his body; by whose relation we also came to the knowledge of those few particulars which we have briefly set down. He also related his visions to king Aldfrid,[1] a man most learned in all respects, and was by him so willingly and attentively heard, that at his request he was admitted into the monastery above mentioned, and received the monastic tonsure on the crown of his head; and the said king, when he happened to be in those parts, very often went to hear him. At that time the abbat and priest, Aediluald,[2] of religious and humble life, presided over the monastery, and now, with actions worthy of his order, possesses the episcopal see of the church of Lindisfarne.

§ 396. He had a more private place of residence assigned him in

[1] This Aldfrid has already been mentioned by Beda in terms of commendation, see § 341. It would hence appear that his kingdom embraced the district in which Melrose is situated.

[2] Concerning this bishop of Lindisfarne, see Acta SS. mens. Feb. ii. 604. He will again be noticed in Beda's Life of St. Cuthbert, § 50.

that monastery, where he might the more freely apply himself to the service of his Creator in continual prayers. And as that place lay on the bank of the river, he was wont often to go into the same, from the desire which he had to do penance in his body, and many times to dip himself quite under the water, and to continue saying psalms or prayers in the same as long as he could endure it, standing still sometimes up to the middle, and sometimes to the neck in water; and when he went out from thence ashore, he never took off his cold and frozen garments till they grew warm and dry from his body. And when in the winter the half-broken pieces of ice were swimming about him, which he had himself broken in order to make room to stand or dip himself in the river, those who beheld it would say, "It is wonderful, brother Drycthelm," for so he was called, "that you are able anyhow to endure such violent cold;" he simply answered, for he was a man of much simplicity and indifferent wit, "I have seen greater cold." And when they said, "It is strange that you will endure such strict austerity," he replied, "I have seen greater austerity." Thus he continued, through an indefatigable desire of the good things of heaven, to subdue his aged body with daily fasting, till the day of his being called away; and thus he forwarded the salvation of many by his words and example.

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CHAP. XIII. [A.D. 704—709.]—OF ANOTHER, WHO ON THE APPROACH OF DEATH SAW A BOOK CONTAINING ALL HIS SINS, WHICH WAS SHOWED HIM BY DEVILS.

§ 397. IT happened quite the contrary with one in the province of the Mercians, whose visions and words (but not his behaviour) were advantageous to others, but not to himself. In the time of Coenred,[1] who reigned after Aedilred, there was a layman in a military employment, no less acceptable to the king for his worldly industry, than displeasing to him for his private neglect of himself. The king earnestly admonished him to confess and amend, and to forsake his wicked courses, before he should lose all time for repentance and amendment by the surprise of a sudden death. Though frequently warned, he despised the words of salvation, and promised he would do penance at some future time. In the meantime, falling sick, he was confined to his bed, and began to feel very severe pains. The king coming to him, (for he loved him much,) earnestly exhorted him, even then, before death, to repent of his offences. He answered that he would not then confess his sins, but would do it when he had recovered of his sickness, lest his companions should upbraid him with having done that for fear of death, which he had refused to do in health. He thought he then spoke very bravely, but it afterwards appeared that he had been miserably deluded by the wiles of the devil.

§ 398. The disease still increasing, when the king came again to visit and instruct him, he cried out with a lamentable voice, "What

[1] Concerning Coenred, see § 412. The incident here mentioned must have occurred between A.D. 704 and 709.

will you have now? What are ye come for? for you can no longer give me anything useful to my salvation." The king answered, "Do not talk so; behave yourself like a man in his right mind." —"I am not mad," replied he, "but I have now all the guilt of my wicked conscience before my eyes."—"What is the meaning of that?" rejoined the king. "Not long since," said he, "there came into this house two most beautiful youths, and sat down by me, the one at my head, and the other at my feet. One of them produced a most beautiful book, but excessively small, and gave it me to read; and looking into it, I there found all the good actions which I had ever done in my life written down, and they were very few and inconsiderable. They took back the book and said nothing to me. Then, on a sudden, appeared an army of wicked and hideous spirits, encompassing this house without, and almost entirely filling it within. Then he, who, by the blackness of his dismal face, and his sitting above the rest, seemed to be the chief of them, taking out a book horrid to behold, of a prodigious size, and of almost insupportable weight, commanded one of his followers to bring it to me to read. Having read it, I found therein most plainly written, in black characters, all the crimes I ever committed, not only in word and deed, but even in the least thought. Then he said to those bright beings in white, who sat by me, 'Why do you sit here, since you most certainly know that this man is ours?' They answered, 'You are in the right; take him and add him as an accession to your own damnation.' This said, they immediately vanished, and two most wicked spirits rising, with ploughshares in their hands, one of them struck me on the head, and the other on the foot. These strokes are now with great torture penetrating through my bowels to the inward parts of my body, and as soon as they meet I shall die, and the devils being ready to snatch me away, I shall be dragged into the chambers of hell."

§ 399. Thus talked that wretch in his despair, and dying soon after, he is now in vain suffering in eternal torments that penance which he refused to suffer during a short time, that he might obtain forgiveness. Of whom it is manifest, that (as the holy pope Gregory[1] writes of certain persons) he did not see these things for his own sake, for they availed him not, but for the instruction of others, who, knowing of his death, should be afraid to put off the time of repentance, whilst they have leisure; lest, being prevented by sudden death, they should depart impenitent. That he saw different books laid before him by the good and evil spirits, was done by divine dispensation, that we may keep in mind that our actions and thoughts are not lost in the wind, but are all kept to be examined by the Supreme Judge, and will in the end be shown us either by friendly or hostile angels. Whereas the angels first produced a white book, and then the devils a black one; the former a very small one, the latter one very large; it is to be observed, that in his childhood he did some good actions, all which he nevertheless obscured by the evil actions of his youth. If, on the

[1] Beda here apparently refers to Gregory's Dialogues, IV. xxxi. xxxii, speaking of the unhappy deaths of Reparatus and another.

contrary, he had taken care in his youth to correct the errors of his boyhood, and to cancel them in God's sight by doing well, he might have been associated to the number of those of whom the Psalm says, "Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are hidden." [Ps. xxxi. 1.] This story, as I learned it of the venerable bishop Pecthelm, I have thought proper to relate in a plain manner, for the salvation of my readers or hearers.

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### Chap. XIV.—Of another, who, being at the point of death, saw the Place of Punishment appointed for himself in hell.

§ 400. I, MYSELF, knew a brother (whom I wish I had not known), whose name I could mention if it were necessary, and who resided in a noble monastery, but himself lived ignobly. He was frequently reproved by the brethren and elders of the place, and admonished to adopt a more chastened life; and though he would not give ear to them, he was long patiently borne with by them, on account of his usefulness in temporal works, for he was an excellent carpenter. He was much addicted to drunkenness, and the other pleasures of a lawless life, and more used to stop in his workshop day and night, than to go to church to sing and pray, and hear the Word of life with the brethren. For which reason it happened to him according to the saying, that he who will not willingly and humbly enter the gate of the church, will certainly be damned, and enter the gate of hell, whether he will or no. For he falling sick, and being reduced to his latter end, called the brethren, and with much lamentation, and like one damned, began to tell them, that he saw hell open, and Satan at the bottom of the pit thereof; as also Caiaphas, with the others that slew our Lord, by him delivered up to avenging flames. "In whose neighbourhood," said he, "I see a place of eternal perdition provided for myself, miserable wretch." The brethren hearing these words, began diligently to exhort him, that he should repent even then, whilst he was in the flesh. He answered in despair, "I have no time now to change my course of life, when I have myself seen my judgment accomplished."

§ 401. Whilst uttering these words, he died without having received the saving viaticum, and his body was buried in the remotest parts of the monastery, nor did any one dare either to say masses or sing psalms, or even to pray for him. How far has our Lord divided the light from the darkness! The blessed protomartyr, Stephen, being about to suffer death for the truth, saw the heavens open, the glory of God revealed, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. And where he was to be after death, there he fixed the eyes of his mind before death, that he might die the more joyfully. On the contrary, this carpenter, of a dark mind and actions, when death was at hand, saw hell open and witnessed the damnation of the devil and his followers; and the unhappy wretch also saw his own prison among them, to the end that, despairing of his salvation, he might die the more miserably; but

might by his perdition afford cause of salvation to the living who should hear of it. This happened lately in the province of the Bernicians, and being reported abroad far and near, induced many to repent of their sins without delay, which we hope may also be the result of this our narrative.

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CHAP. XV. [A.D. 701—704.]—HOW SEVERAL CHURCHES OF THE SCOTS, AT THE INSTANCE OF ADAMNAN, CONFORMED TO THE CATHOLIC EASTER; AND HOW THE SAME PERSON WROTE A BOOK ABOUT THE HOLY PLACES.

§ 402. AT this time a great part of the Scots in Ireland, and some also of the Britons in Britain, through the goodness of God, conformed to the proper and ecclesiastical time of keeping Easter. Adamnan,[1] priest and abbat of the monks that were in the isle of Hii, was sent ambassador by his nation to Aldfrid,[2] king of the Angles, where having made some stay, he observed the canonical rites of the church, and was earnestly admonished by many, who were more learned than himself, not to presume to live contrary to the universal custom of the Church, either in relation to the observance of Easter, or any other decrees[3] whatsoever, considering the small number of his followers, seated in so distant a corner of the world. In consequence of this he changed his mind, and readily preferred those things which he had seen and heard in the churches of the Angles, to the customs which he and his people had hitherto followed. For he was a good and a wise man, and remarkably learned in the knowledge of the Scriptures.

§ 403. Returning home, he endeavoured to bring his own people that were in Hii, or that were subject to that monastery, into the way of truth, which he himself had learned and embraced with all his heart; but in this he could not prevail. He then sailed over into Ireland, to preach to those people, and by modest exhortation declaring the true time of Easter, he reduced many of them, and almost all that were not under the dominion of those of Hii, from their ancient error to the catholic unity, and taught them to keep the proper time of Easter. Returning to his island, after having celebrated Easter in Ireland canonically, he most earnestly inculcated the observance of the catholic time of Easter in his monastery, yet without being able to prevail; and it so happened that he

[1] There is some little diversity of opinion as to the dates of the events mentioned in this chapter. Assuming, as is probable, that Adamnan died shortly before the Easter of A.D. 704, he must have celebrated the Easter of 703 in Ireland; and as his attempt to bring over the inmates of the monastery of Iona occurred after his visit to Northumbria, we cannot place that mission later than 700 or 701. Ussher fixes his embassy to Aldfrid in 703, and his death in 704; but the succession of events noted above renders this more than doubtful. See Brit. Eccl. Antiq. pp. 367, 381. Petrie widely differs from this calculation. Finding from the Annals of Ulster and Tigernach that Adamnan conveyed back into Ireland certain captives in 687, he concludes that the mission to Northumbria had reference to their freedom; but this arrangement seems hardly consistent with the language of Beda, which would seem to bring within a much narrower compass the events which took place between his visit to Aldfrid and his death.

[2] It will be remembered that this Aldfrid had long resided among the Irish.

[3] Tonsure and Confirmation were also disputed points.

departed[1] this life before the next year came round. For the divine goodness so ordained it, that as he was a great lover of peace and unity, he should be taken away to everlasting life before he would be obliged, on the return of the time of Easter, to have still more serious discord with those that would not follow him in the truth.

§ 404. This same person wrote a book[2] about the Holy Places, most useful to many readers; his authority for which, in teaching and dictating,[3] was Arculf,[4] a bishop of Gaul, who had gone to Jerusalem[5] for the sake of the Holy Places; and having surveyed all the Land of Promise, travelled to Damascus, Constantinople, Alexandria, and many islands of the sea, and returning home by sea, was by a violent storm forced upon the western coast of Britain. After many other accidents, he came to the aforesaid servant of Christ, Adamnan, who, finding him to be learned in the Scriptures, and acquainted with the Holy Places, entertained him zealously, and attentively gave ear to him, insomuch that he presently committed to writing all that Arculf said he had seen remarkable in the Holy Places. Thus he composed, as I have stated, a work beneficial to many, and particularly to those who, being far removed from those places where the patriarchs and apostles lived, know no more of them than what they learn by reading. Adamnan presented this book to king Aldfrid, and through his bounty it came to be read by lesser[6] persons. The writer thereof was also well rewarded by him with many presents, and sent back into his country. I believe it will be acceptable to our readers if we collect some particulars from the same, and insert them in our History.

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### Chap. XVI. [A.D. 705.]—The Account given in the aforesaid Book of the Place of our Lord's Nativity, Passion, and Resurrection.

§ 405. He wrote concerning the place of the nativity of our Lord, to this effect:—"Bethlehem,[7] the city of David, is seated on a narrow ridge, encompassed on all sides with valleys, being a thousand paces in length from west to east, the wall low without towers, built along the edge of the flat summit. In the east angle thereof is a sort of natural half-cave, the outward part whereof is said to have been the place where our Lord was born; the inner is called our Lord's Manger. This cave is all covered within with rich marble, over the place in which our Lord is stated to have been born, and over it is the great church of St. Mary." He

[1] Adamnan died A.D. 704, according to Tigernach. See also Ussher, Antiq. Brit. Eccl. p. 367.

[2] This treatise is printed by Mabillon, Acta SS. Ord. S. Bened. III. ii. 456, from MSS. in the Vatican and at Corbei.

[3] Adamnan's Prologue has furnished Beda with an account of the process by which this work was reduced into its present form.

[4] Mabillon, although intimately acquainted with the early ecclesiastical history of France, was unable to decide of what see this individual was bishop, as he himself admits. See his Introduction to this treatise, § 6.

[5] He states in his Prologue that he remained here during nine months.

[6] Among whom we may presume Beda includes himself.

[7] See Arculf, ii. §§ 1, 2.

likewise wrote about the place of his passion and resurrection in this manner:—"Entering the city of Jerusalem on the north side, the first place to be visited, according to the disposition of the streets, is the church of Constantine, called the Martyrdom.[1] It was built by the emperor Constantine, in a magnificent and royal manner, on account of the cross of our Lord having been found there by his mother Helena. From thence, to the westward, appears the church of Golgotha,[2] in which is also to be seen the rock which once bore the cross with our Saviour's body fixed on it, and now it bears a large silver cross, with a great brazen circle hanging over it surrounded with lamps. Under[3] the place of our Lord's cross, a crypt is hewn out of the rock, in which sacrifice is offered on an altar for honourable persons deceased, their bodies remaining meanwhile in the street. To the westward of this church is the Anastasis,[4] that is, the round church of our Saviour's Resurrection, encompassed with three walls, and supported by twelve columns. Between each of the walls is a broad road-space containing three altars at three different points of the middle wall; that is, to the south, the north, and the west. It has eight doors or entrances through the three opposite walls; four whereof front to the north-east, and four to the east. In the midst of it is the round tomb of our Lord cut out of the rock, the roof of which a man standing within can touch with his hand; the entrance is on the east; against it is still laid that great stone, which to this day bears the marks of the iron tools within, but on the outside it is all covered with marble to the very top of the roof, which is adorned with gold, and bears a large golden cross. In the north part of the monument, the tomb[5] of our Lord is hewn out of the same rock, being seven feet in length, and measuring three palms in height above the floor; the entrance being on the south side, where twelve lamps burn day and night, four within the sepulchre, and eight above on the right-hand side. The stone that was laid at the entrance to the monument is now cleft in two; nevertheless, the lesser part of it stands as a square altar before the door of the monument; the greater part makes another square altar at the east end of the same church, and is covered with linen cloths. The colour of the said monument and sepulchre appears to be of mixed white and red."

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### Chap. XVII. [A.D. 705.]—Of the Place of our Lord's Ascension, and the Tombs of the Patriarchs.

§ 406. Concerning the place of our Lord's ascension, the aforesaid author writes thus:—"Mount[6] Olivet is equal in height to Mount Sion, but exceeds it in breadth and length; bearing few trees besides vines and olive-trees, but fruitful in wheat and barley, for the nature of that soil is not calculated for bearing things of large or heavy growth, but grass and flowers. On the very top of it, where our Lord ascended into heaven, is a large round church,

[1] Arculf, i. § 7. [2] Id. § 7. [3] Id. § 3.
[4] Id. § 5. [5] Id. § 4. [6] Id. § 23.

having about it three vaulted porches covered on the top. For the inner house could not be vaulted and covered, because of the passage of our Lord's body; but it has an altar on the east side, covered with a narrow roof. In the midst of it are to be seen the last prints of our Lord's feet, the sky appearing open above where He ascended; and though the earth is daily carried away by believers, yet still it remains as before, and retains the same impression, as it were, of the footprints. Round about this lies a brazen wheel, as high as a man's neck, having an entrance towards the west, with a great lamp hanging above it on pulleys, and burning night and day. In the western part of the same church are eight windows; and eight lamps, hanging opposite to them by cords, cast their light through the glass as far as Jerusalem; this light is said to strike the hearts of the beholders with a sort of trembling joy and humility. Every year, on the day of our Lord's Ascension, when mass is ended, a strong blast of wind is said to come down, and to cast to the ground all that are in the church."

§ 407. Of the situation of Hebron, and the tombs of the patriarchs, he writes thus:—"Hebron,[1] once the city and metropolis of David's kingdom, now only showing what it was by its ruins, has, one furlong to the east of it, a double cave in the valley, where the tombs of the patriarchs are enclosed within a square wall, their heads lying to the north. Each of the tombs is covered with a single stone, worked like the stones of a church, and of a white colour, for three patriarchs. That for Adam is of meaner and more common workmanship, and he lies not far from them at the furthest northern extremity of that wall. There are also some poorer and smaller monuments of three women. The hill Mamre[2] is a thousand paces from these monuments to the north, and is full of grass and flowers, having a flat plain on the top. In the northern part of it, Abraham's oak, being a stump about twice as high as a man, is enclosed in a church."

§ 408. Thus much have we collected from the works of the aforesaid writer, keeping to the sense of his words, but more briefly and tersely delivered, and have thought fit to insert in our History. Whosoever desires to see more of the contents of that book, may see it either in that same volume, or in that which we have lately epitomized from it.

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CHAP. XVIII. [A.D. 705.]—HOW THE SOUTH SAXONS RECEIVED EADBERCT AND EOLLA, AND THE WEST SAXONS, DANIEL AND ALDHELM, FOR THEIR BISHOPS. OF THE WRITINGS OF THE SAME ALDHELM.

§ 409. IN the year of the incarnation of our Lord 705,[3] Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, died shortly before the completion of the twentieth year of his reign. His son Osred, a boy of about

[1] See Arculf, ii. §§ 8, 10.
[2] Id. §§ 9, 11.
[3] Since Aldfrid came to the throne in May, 685 (§ 341), and reigned something less than twenty years, the Saxon Chronicle and Florence of Worcester

eight years of age, succeeding him in the kingdom, reigned eleven years.[1] In the beginning of his reign, Haeddi,[2] bishop of the West Saxons, departed to the heavenly life; he was indeed a good and just man, and as a bishop he regulated his life and doctrine rather by his innate love of virtue, than by what he had gained from learning.[3] The most reverend prelate, Pecthelm, of whom we shall speak in the proper [4] place, and who was a long time either deacon or monk with his successor Aldhelm,[5] is wont to relate that many miraculous cures have been wrought in the place where he died, through the merit of his sanctity; and that the men of that province used to carry the dust from thence for the sick, which when they had put into water, the drinking or sprinkling thereof restored health to many sick men and beasts; so that this holy earth being frequently carried away, there was a considerable hole left in that place.

§ 410. Upon his death the bishopric of that province was divided into two dioceses.[6] One of them was given to Danihel,[7] which he governs to this day; the other to Aldhelm, wherein he most worthily presided during four years: both of them were well instructed, as well in ecclesiastical affairs as in the knowledge of the Scriptures. Aldhelm, when he was only a priest and abbat of the monastery which is called "the City of Mailduf" [Malmesbury], by order of a synod of his own nation, wrote a notable book against the error of the Britons, who did not celebrate Easter at the proper time, and who do several other things not consonant to the purity and the peace of the church; and by the reading of this book he persuaded many of the Britons, who were subject to the West Saxons, to adopt the catholic celebration of our Lord's Passover. He likewise wrote a notable book on Virginity, which, in imitation of Sedulius, he composed in a double form, that is, in hexameter verse and in prose. He wrote some other books, as being a man most learned in all respects, for he had a neat style, and was, as I have said, wonderful for ecclesiastical and liberal erudition. On his death,

must be wrong when they state that he died on the 19th of the kalends of January, 705; for before that date his twenty-first regnal year would have commenced. But if we substitute "June" for "January," (months often interchanged by the transcribers of early MSS.) it may hence be assumed that this king died 16th May, 705, when a few days only were wanting to complete the twentieth year of his reign, as Beda has stated. See Pagi, A.D. 705, § 7.

[1] After the throne had been occupied for two months by Eadwulf, according to Eddius in his Life of Wilfrid.

[2] Concerning Haeddi, see Acta SS. mens. Jul. ii. 482; Wright's Anglo-Saxon Biography, p. 206.

[3] Malmesbury, fol. 137, b., refers to a collection of the letters of Haeddi, which he characterises as "non nimis indocte composite." These letters have not come down to our time.

[4] See § 451.

[5] The Life of Aldhelm and his correspondence will be given in their proper place in this collection, and he may therefore be passed over for the present.

[6] Concerning this division into the dioceses of Winchester and Sherborne, see the Life of Aldhelm, by William of Malmesbury.

[7] The date of Daniel's death is uncertain; but he assuredly was alive in 745, in which year he witnessed a charter by which Cuthred, king of Wessex, granted land to Malmesbury, (but it is of suspicious authority,) and the Chronicle of Melrose says he died in 746. Several of his letters will be found in the Correspondence of Boniface.

Fortheri[1] was made bishop in his stead, and is living at this time, being likewise a man very learned in the holy Scriptures.

§ 411. Whilst these persons were bishops, it was enjoined by synodical decree,[2] that the province of the South Saxons, which till that time belonged to the diocese of the city of Winchester, where Daniel then presided, should also have an episcopal see, and a bishop of its own. Eadberct, at that time abbat of the monastery of bishop Uilfrid, of blessed memory, called Selaeseu, was consecrated their first bishop. On his death, Eolla succeeded in the bishopric. He also died some years since, and the bishopric has been discontinued to this day.

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CHAP. XIX. [A.D. 709.]—HOW COINRED, KING OF THE MERCIANS, AND OFFA, KING OF THE EAST SAXONS, ENDED THEIR DAYS AT ROME, IN THE MONASTIC HABIT. OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF BISHOP UILFRID.

§ 412. IN the fourth year of the reign of Osred, Coinred,[3] who had for some time very nobly governed the kingdom of the Mercians, did a much more noble act, by quitting the throne of his kingdom, and going to Rome;[4] where having received the tonsure, when Constantine was pope, and been made a monk at the shrine of the apostles, he continued to his last hour in prayers, fastings, and alms-deeds.[5] He was succeeded in the throne by Ceolred,[6] the son of Aedilred, who had held the same kingdom before Coinred. With him went the son of Sigheri, king of the East Saxons, above mentioned,[7] whose name was Offa, a youth of most lovely age and beauty, and most earnestly desired by all his nation to be their king. He, with like devotion, quitted his wife,[8] lands, kindred, and country, for Christ and for the gospel, that he might "receive an hundred-fold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting." [Matt. xix. 29.] He also, when they came to the holy places at Rome, receiving the tonsure, and adopting a monastic life, attained the long wished for sight of the blessed apostles in heaven.

§ 413. The same year that they departed from Britain, the celebrated prelate, Uilfrid,[9] died in the province of Undalum,[10]

[1] The date of his death, also, is uncertain; concerning him see further in the Correspondence of Boniface.

[2] Smith, upon the authority of Matthew of Westminster, (who here copies Wendover,) places this synod and the consecration of Eadbert in 711.

[3] Coinred, the son of Wolfhere, ascended the throne in 704, and resigned it in 709.

[4] This expedition could not have been undertaken before the month of May, 709, as appears by the facts mentioned in conjunction with the death of Wilfrid.

[5] Among these was, it was presumed, the forged charter to Egwin, in favour of Evesham, printed in Dugdale's Monast. Anglic. i. 144; Acta SS. mens. Jan. i. 712; Kemble, Cod. Dipl. No. lxi.

[6] Ceolred, the grandson of Penda, succeeded Coinred in 709, and died in 716.

[7] See § 250.

[8] He was betrothed, but not married, to Kineswitha, daughter of Penda, king of Mercia.

[9] The reader is referred to the life of this important personage by Eddius (a translation of which will be found in our collection of historians) for such remarks as seem necessary for the illustration as well of that writer as of the incidents here mentioned by Beda.

[10] At Oundle, in Northamptonshire.

after he had been bishop forty-five years. His body, being laid in a coffin, was carried to his monastery, called "In-hrypum" [Ripon], and there buried in the church of the blessed apostle Peter, with the honour due to so great a prelate. We will now turn back, and briefly mention some particulars of his life.

Being a boy[1] of a good disposition, and behaving himself more worthily than boys of that age, he conducted himself so modestly and discreetly in all respects, that he was deservedly beloved, esteemed, and cherished by his elders as if he were one of themselves. At fourteen years of age he preferred the monastic to the secular life; which when he had signified to his father, (for his mother was then dead,) he readily consented to his heavenly wishes, and advised him to persist in his holy resolution. Accordingly, he came to the isle of Lindisfarne, and there giving himself up to the service of the monks, he took care diligently to learn and to perform those things which belong to monastic purity and piety; and being of an acute understanding, he in a very short time learned the psalms and some books, before he was tonsured: but even then he was already become very remarkable for the virtues of humility and obedience, which are greater things than the tonsure; for which he was deservedly beloved and respected by his elders and equals. Having served God some years in that monastery, and being a clear-sighted youth, he observed that the way to virtue taught by the Scots was not perfect, and he resolved in his mind to go to Rome,[2] to see what ecclesiastical or monastic rites were in use there. The brethren being made acquainted therewith, commended his design, and advised him to put it into execution. He then repaired to queen Eanfled, to whom he was known, and who had caused him to be associated into that monastery by her advice and assistance; and he acquainted her that he was desirous to visit the churches of the blessed apostles. She, being pleased with the youth's good resolution, sent him into Kent, to king Erconberct, who was her uncle's son, requesting that he would send him to Rome in an honourable manner. At that time, Honorius, one of the disciples of the holy pope Gregory, and well instructed in ecclesiastical matters, was archbishop there. Whilst he made some stay there, and, being a youth of an active spirit, diligently applied himself to learn those things which he saw, another youth, called Biscop, surnamed Benedict, of the English nobility, arrived there, being likewise desirous to go to Rome, of which we have before[3] made mention.

§ 414. The king gave him Uilfrid for a companion, with orders to conduct him to Rome along with himself. When they came to Lyons, Uilfrid was detained there by Dalfin,[4] the bishop of that city; but Benedict hastened on to Rome, completing the journey which he had commenced. That prelate was delighted with the youth's prudent discourse, the gracefulness of his fair aspect, the alacrity of his behaviour, and the sedateness and gravity of his thoughts; for which reason he plentifully supplied him and his companions with all necessaries, as long as they stayed with him; and further

[1] See Eddius, § 2. [2] Id. § 3. [3] See § 305. [4] Eddius, § 4.

offered to commit to him the government of no inconsiderable part of Gaul, to give him a maiden daughter of his own brother to wife, and always to receive him as his own adopted son. He returned thanks for the favour which he was pleased to show to a stranger, and answered, that he had resolved upon another course of life, and for that reason he had left his country and set out for Rome.

§ 415. Having heard thus much, the bishop sent him to Rome,[1] furnishing him with a guide and plenty of all things requisite for his journey, earnestly requesting that he would come that way when he returned into his own country. Uilfrid arriving at Rome, by constantly applying himself to prayer and the study of ecclesiastical affairs, as he had before proposed to himself, gained the friendship of that most holy and learned man Boniface, the archdeacon, who was also counsellor to the apostolic pope, by whose instruction he regularly learned the four Gospels, the true calculation of Easter, and many other things appertaining to ecclesiastical discipline, unto which he could not attain in his own country. When he had spent some months there, in successful study, he returned [2] into Gaul, to Dalfin; and having stayed with him three years, received from him the tonsure, and was so much beloved by him that he had thoughts of making him his heir: but this was prevented by the bishop's cruel and untimely death, and Uilfrid was reserved to be bishop of his own, that is, the English, nation; for queen Baldhild sent soldiers with orders to put the bishop to death; whom Uilfrid, his clerk, attended to the place where he was to be beheaded, being very desirous, though the bishop opposed it, to die along with him; but the executioners, understanding that he was a stranger, and of the English nation, spared him, and would not put him to death with his bishop.

§ 416. Returning to England, he was admitted to the friendship of king Alchfrid,[3] who had always followed and loved the catholic rules of the church; and therefore finding him to be a catholic, he gave him land of ten families at the place called Stanford; and not long after, the monastery, of thirty families, at the place called "In-hrypum"[4] [Ripon]; which place he had lately given to those that followed the doctrine of the Scots, to build a monastery upon. But, forasmuch as they afterwards, being left to their choice, would rather quit the place than adopt the catholic Easter, and other canonical rites, according to the custom of the Roman and apostolic church, he gave the same to him, whom he found to follow better discipline and better customs.

§ 417. At the same time,[5] by the said king's command, he was ordained priest in the same monastery, by Agilberct, bishop of the Geuissi, above mentioned,[6] the king being desirous that a man of so much learning and piety should continue with him as his own especial priest and teacher; and not long after, having detected and banished the Scottish sect, as was said above,[7] he, with the advice and consent of his father Osuiu, sent him into Gaul,[8] to be

[1] Eddius, § 5. [2] Id. § 6. [3] Id. § 7. [4] Id. § 8. [5] Id. § 9.
[6] See §§ 228, 236, 243. [7] See §§ 236, 416. [8] Eddius, §§ 11, 12, 13.

consecrated bishop, he being at that time about thirty years of age; and the same Agilberct being then bishop of the city of Paris, and eleven other bishops meeting at the dedication of the bishop, that service was most honourably performed. Whilst he was yet beyond the sea, Ceadda, a holy man, was consecrated bishop of York, by command of king Osuiu, as has been said above;[1] and having ably ruled that church three years, he retired to govern his monastery which is in Laestingaei, and Uilfrid was made bishop of all the province of the Northumbrians.

§ 418. Afterwards, in the reign of Ecgfrid, he was expelled[2] his bishopric, and others were consecrated bishops in his stead, of whom mention has been made above. Designing to go to Rome, to plead his cause before the apostolic pope, when he was aboard the ship,[3] the west wind blew, and he was driven into Frisia,[4] and honourably received by that barbarous people and their king Aldgils, to whom he preached Christ, and instructed many thousands of them in the word of truth, washing them from their abominations in the fount of the Saviour. Thus he there began the work of the gospel, which was afterwards finished with great devotion by Uilbrord,[5] a most reverend bishop of Jesus Christ. Having happily spent the winter there with his new converts, he set out[6] again on his way to Rome, where his cause having been tried before pope Agatho and many bishops, he was by their universal sentence fully acquitted of that which had been laid to his charge, and declared worthy of his bishopric.

§ 419. At the same time, the said pope Agatho assembling a synod at Rome, of one hundred and twenty-five bishops, against those that taught that there was only one will and operation in our Lord and Saviour, ordered Uilfrid also to be summoned, and, when seated among the bishops, to declare his own faith and the faith of the province or island from whence he came; and when he and his people had been found orthodox in their faith, it was thought fit to record the same among the acts of that synod, which was done in this manner: "Uilfrid, the beloved of God, bishop of the city of York, having appealed to the apostolic see respecting his cause, and being by that authority acquitted of everything, whether specified against him or not, and having taken his seat in judgment, with one hundred and twenty-five other bishops in the synod, made confession of the true and catholic faith, and subscribed the same in the name of all the northern part of the isles of Britain and Ireland, inhabited by the English and Britons, as also by the Scots and Picts."

§ 420. After[7] this, returning into Britain, he converted[8] the province of the South Saxons from their idolatrous worship to the faith of Christ. He also sent ministers of the Word to the Isle of Wight;[9] and in the second year of Aldfrid, who reigned after Ecgfrid, he was restored[10] to his see and bishopric by that king's

[1] See § 244, and Eddius, § 14.
[2] See § 289, and Eddius, § 23.
[3] Eddius, § 24.
[4] Id. §§ 25—27.
[5] See §§ 380—388.
[6] Eddius, § 28.
[7] Id. § 31.
[8] See § 289; Eddius, §§ 39, 40.
[9] See § 298.
[10] Eddius, § 42.

invitation. However, five years after, being again accused by that same king and many bishops, he was again expelled[1] from his diocese. Coming to Rome,[2] together with his accusers, and being allowed to make his defence in their presence, before a number of bishops and the apostolic pope John, it was declared[3] by the unanimous judgment of them all, that his accusers had in part laid false accusations to his charge; and the aforesaid pope undertook to write[4] to the kings of the English, Aedilred and Aldfrid, to cause him to be restored to his bishopric, because he had been falsely condemned.

§ 421. His acquittal was much forwarded by the reading of the synod of pope Agatho, of blessed memory, which had been formerly held when he himself was present at Rome, and had sat in council among the bishops, as has been said before.[5] For that synod being, on account of the trial, by order of the apostolic pope, read before the nobility and a great number of the people for some days, they came to the place where it was written, "Uilfrid, the beloved of God, bishop of the city of York, having by appeal referred his cause to the apostolic see, and being by that power cleared of everything, whether specified against him or not," as above stated. This being read, the hearers were amazed, and the reader stopping, they began to ask of one another, who that bishop Uilfrid was. Then Boniface, the apostolic pope's counsellor, and many others, who had seen him there in the days of pope Agatho, said that he was the same bishop who lately came to Rome to be tried by the apostolic see, being accused by his people, and who, said they, having long since been here upon such like accusation, the cause and controversy between both parties being heard and discussed, was proved by pope Agatho, of blessed memory, to have been wrongfully expelled from his bishopric, and so much honoured by him, that he commanded him to sit in the council of bishops which he had assembled, as a man of untainted faith and an upright mind. This being heard, the pope and all the rest said, that a man of such great authority, who had exercised the episcopal function for near forty years, ought not to be condemned, but, being cleared of all the crimes laid to his charge, to return home with honour.

§ 422. Having arrived[6] in the parts of Gaul, on his way back to Britain, on a sudden he fell[7] sick, and the disease increasing, became so ill, that he could not ride on horseback, but was carried in his bed by the hands of his servants. Being thus come to the city of Meaux, in Gaul, he lay four days and nights, as if he had been dead, and only by his faint breathing showed that he had any life in him; having continued so four days, without meat or drink, without speaking or hearing, he, at length, on the dawn of the fifth day, as it were awakening out of a dead sleep, sat up in bed, and opening his eyes, saw numbers of the brethren singing and weeping about him, and, fetching a gentle sigh, asked where Acca, the priest, was. This man, being called, immediately came in, and seeing him thus recovered and able to speak, knelt down, and returned thanks to God, with all the brethren there present. When they

[1] See § 385; Eddius, § 42. [2] Eddius, § 47. [3] Id. § 50.
[4] Id. § 51. [5] See § 419. [6] Eddius, § 52. [7] Id. § 53.

had sat awhile, and begun to discourse, with godly fear, on the heavenly judgments, the bishop ordered the rest to go out for a season, and spoke to the priest Acca in this manner :—

§ 423. "A dreadful vision has now appeared to me, which I wish you to hear and keep secret, till I know how God will please to dispose of me. There stood by me a certain person, remarkable for his white garments, telling me that he was Michael, the archangel, and said, 'I am sent to you for this end, that I may recal you from death: for the Lord has granted you life, through the prayers and tears of your disciples, and by the intercession of his blessed mother, Mary, of perpetual virginity; wherefore I tell you, that you shall now at this time recover from this sickness; but be ready, for I will return and visit you at the end of four years. But when you come into your country, you shall recover most of your possessions that have been taken from you, and you shall end your days in quietness and peace.'" The bishop accordingly recovered, at which all persons rejoiced, and gave thanks to God; and setting forward on his journey, he arrived in Britain.

§ 424. Having[1] read the letters which he brought from the apostolic pope, Berctuald, the archbishop, and Aedilred, who had been formerly king, but was then an abbat, readily took his part; for the said Aedilred, calling to him Coinred, whom he had made king in his own stead, he requested of him to be friends with Uilfrid, in which request he prevailed; but Aldfrid,[2] king of the Northumbrians, refused to admit him. However, he died[3] soon after, and it so happened that during the reign of his son Osredi, when a synod[4] was assembled, near the river Nidd, and after some contention on both sides, at length, by the consent of all, he was admitted to preside over his church; and thus he lived in peace four years, that is, until the day of his death. He died in his monastery, which he had in the province "Undalum,"[5] under the government of the abbat Cuduald; and by the ministry of the brethren, he was carried to his first monastery, which is called "In-hrypum," and buried in the church of the blessed Peter the apostle, close by the south end of the altar, as has been mentioned above, with this epitaph over him :—

Here the great prelate Uilfrid lies entomb'd,
Who, led by piety, this temple rear'd
To God, and hallow'd with blest Peter's name,
To whom our Lord the keys of heaven consign'd:
Moreover gold and purple vestments gave;
High rear'd a cross,—a trophy shining bright;
The four Evangelists, each in his order,
At his command in golden letters written,
And placed them in a shrine of ruddy gold.
He likewise brought the solemn Easter feast
To the just standard of the canon law;
Which our forefathers fix'd and well observ'd,
But long by error changed, he well restored.
Into these parts a numerous swarm of monks
He brought, and strictly taught their founder's rules.
In lapse of years, by many dangers toss'd,

[1] Eddius, § 54. [2] Id. § 55. [3] Id. § 56; see also Eccl. Hist. § 409.
[4] Eddius, § 57. [5] Id. § 61.

At home by discords, and in foreign realms,
Having sat bishop five-and-forty years,
He died, and joyful sought the realms above.
Grant, blessed Lord, that favour'd with his aid,
The flock may follow in their pastor's path.

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CHAP. XX. [A.D. 710.]—HOW ALBINUS SUCCEEDED TO THE RELIGIOUS ABBAT HADRIAN, AND ACCA TO UILFRID, IN THE BISHOPRIC.

§ 425. THE next year after the death of the aforesaid father, that is, in the fifth year of king Osred, the most reverend father, abbat Hadrian, fellow-labourer in the word of God with Theodore the archbishop, of blessed memory, died, and was buried in the church of the blessed mother of God, in his own monastery, this being the forty-first year from the time when he was sent by pope Vitalian with Theodore, and the thirty-ninth after his arrival in England. Of whose learning, as well as that of Theodore, one testimony among others is, that Albinus, his disciple, who succeeded him in the government of his monastery, was so well instructed in the study of the Scriptures, that he knew the Greek tongue to no small perfection, and the Latin as thoroughly as the English, which was his native language.

§ 426. [A.D. 709.] Acca, his priest, succeeded Uilfrid in the bishopric of the church of Hagustald; and being himself a most active person, and great in the sight of God and man, he much adorned and added by his wonderful works to the structure of his church, which is dedicated to the blessed apostle Andrew. For he made it his business, and does so still, to procure relics of the blessed apostles and martyrs of Christ from all parts, to erect altars in honour of them, dividing the same by porches in the walls of the church. Besides which, he very diligently gathered the histories of their sufferings, together with other ecclesiastical writings, and erected there a most numerous and noble library. He likewise most industriously provided holy vessels, lights, and such like things as appertain to the adorning of the house of God. He in like manner invited to him a celebrated singer, called Maban, who had been taught to sing by the successors of the disciples of the blessed Gregory in Kent, that he should instruct himself and his clergy; and he kept him for twelve years, to teach such ecclesiastical songs as were not known to them, and to restore those to their former state, which, though once known, were corrupted either by want of use, or through neglect. For bishop Acca himself was a most expert singer, as well as most learned in holy writ, most pure in the confession of the catholic faith, and most observant in the rules of ecclesiastical institution; nor does he intend ever to cease to be so till he shall receive the rewards of his pious devotion. He was bred up from his youth and instructed among the clergy of the most holy and beloved of God, Boza, bishop of York. Afterwards, coming to bishop Uilfrid in the hope of improving himself, he spent the rest of his life under him till that bishop's death, and going with him to Rome, learned there many profitable things concerning the government of the holy church, which he could not have learned in his own country.

CHAP. XXI. [A.D. 710.]—HOW ABBAT CEOLFRID SENT THE KING OF THE PICTS ARCHITECTS TO BUILD A CHURCH, AND WITH THEM AN EPISTLE CONCERNING THE CATHOLIC EASTER AND TONSURE.

§ 427. AT that time, Naiton, king of the Picts, who inhabit the northern parts of Britain, taught by frequent study of the ecclesiastical writings, renounced the error by which he and his nation had till then been held, in relation to the observance of Easter; and submitted, together with his people, to celebrate the catholic time of our Lord's resurrection. In order that he might perform this with the greater ease and authority, he sought assistance from the nation of the English, whom he knew to have long since formed their religion after the example of the holy Roman and apostolic church. Accordingly he sent messengers to the venerable man, Ceolfrid, abbat of the monastery of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, which stands at the mouth of the river Wear, and near the river Tyne, at the place called "In-Gyruum" [Jarrow], which he gloriously governed after Benedict, of whom we have before[1] spoken; desiring, that he would write him a letter containing arguments, by the help of which he might the more powerfully confute those that presumed to keep Easter out of the due time; as also concerning the form and manner of the tonsure for distinguishing the clergy; not to mention that he himself possessed much information in these particulars. He also prayed to have architects sent him to build a church in his nation after the Roman manner, promising to dedicate the same in honour of the blessed Peter, the prince of the apostles, and that he and all his people would always follow the custom of the holy Roman apostolic church, as far as they could ascertain the same in consequence of their remoteness from the Roman language and nation. The most reverend abbat Ceolfrid, complying with his desires and solicitations, sent the architects whom he desired, and the following letter[2]:—

§ 428. "*To the most excellent lord, and most glorious king Naitan, abbat Ceolfrid sends greeting in the Lord.* We most readily and willingly endeavour, according to your desire, to explain to you the catholic observance of holy Easter, according to what we have learned of the apostolic see, as you, devout king, with a religious intention, have requested from us; for we know, that whenever the holy church applies herself to learn, to teach, and to guard the truth, which are the affairs of our Lord, the same is given to her from heaven. For a certain worldly writer[3] has most truly said, that the world would be most happily circumstanced if either kings were philosophers, or philosophers were kings. For if a worldly man could judge truly of the philosophy of this world, and form a correct choice concerning the

[1] See § 413.

[2] There is some uncertainty as to the time when this epistle was written. Baronius ascribes it to the year 699, (see his Annal. ad an. § 5,) but this date would appear to be too early, when we remember that this letter was written shortly before the monks of Iona adopted the Roman calculation of Easter, (see § 445,) which occurred, as we know, in 716. We may adopt, therefore, the date assigned to it by Archbishop Ussher, namely, 710.

[3] Plato, De Republ. lib. v. cap. 18. p. 473, d.

state of this world, how much more is it to be wished, and most earnestly to be prayed for by the citizens of the heavenly country, who are only as men travelling in this world, that the more powerful any persons are in this world, the more they may labour to be acquainted with the commands of Him who is the Supreme Judge, and by their examples and authority may induce those that are committed to their charge, as well as themselves, to keep the same.

§ 429. "There are three rules contained in the sacred writings, on account of which it is not lawful for any human authority to change the time of keeping Easter, which has been prescribed to us; two whereof are divinely established in the law of Moses; the third is added in the gospel by means of the passion and resurrection of our Lord. For the law enjoined that the passover should be kept in the first month of the year, and the third week of that month, that is, from the fifteenth day to the one-and-twentieth. It is added, by apostolic institution, in the gospel, that we are to wait for our Lord's-day in that third week, and to keep the beginning of the paschal time on the same. Which threefold rule whosoever shall rightly observe, will never err in fixing the paschal feast. But if you desire to be more plainly and fully informed in all these particulars, it is written in Exodus, where the people of Israel, being about to be delivered out of Egypt, are commanded to keep the first passover, that the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, 'This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month, they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house.' And a little lower, 'And he shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.' [Exod. xii. 2, 3, 6.] By which words it most plainly appears, that thus in the paschal observance mention is made of the fourteenth day, not that the passover is commanded to be kept on that fourteenth day: but the lamb is commanded to be killed on the approach of the evening of the fourteenth day; that is, on the fifteenth day of the moon, which makes the beginning of the third week, when the moon appears in the sky. And because it was on the night of the fifteenth moon, when, by the slaughter of the Egyptians, Israel was redeemed from a long captivity, it is said, 'Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread.' [Exod. xii. 15.] By which words all the third week of the same month is decreed to be kept solemn. But lest we should think that those same seven days were to be reckoned from the fourteenth to the twentieth, God immediately adds, 'Even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses; for whosoever eateth leavened bread, from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel;' and so on, till He says, 'For in this self-same day I will bring your army out of the land of Egypt.' [Exod. xii. 15.]

§ 430. "Thus he calls that the first day of unleavened bread, in

which he was to bring their army out of Egypt. But it is evident, that they were not brought out of Egypt on the fourteenth day, in the evening whereof the lamb was killed, and which is properly called the Passover or Phase, but on the fifteenth day, as is most plainly written in the book of Numbers. 'Departing therefore from Ramesse on the fifteenth day of the first month, the next day the Israelites kept the passover with a high hand.' [Numb. xxxiii. 3.] Thus the seven days of unleavened bread, on the first whereof the people of God were brought out of Egypt, are to be reckoned from the beginning of the third week, as has been said, that is, from the fifteenth day of the first month, till the one-and-twentieth of the same month, that day completed. But the fourteenth day is noted down separately from this number, by the name of the Passover, as is plainly made out by what follows in Exodus: where, when it is said, 'For in this same day I will bring your army out of the land of Egypt;' it is immediately added, 'You shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one-and-twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses.' [Exod. xii. 17—19.] Now, who is there that does not perceive, that there are not seven days only, but rather eight, from the fourteenth to the one-and-twentieth, if the fourteenth be also reckoned in the number? But if, on the other hand, (as by diligent study of the Scriptures is shown to be the truth,) we reckon from the evening of the fourteenth day to the evening of the one-and-twentieth, we shall certainly find that the same fourteenth day gives its evening for the beginning of the paschal feast; so that the whole sacred solemnity contains no more than only seven nights and as many days. By which our definition is proved to be true, wherein we said, that the paschal time is to be celebrated in the first month of the year, and in the third week of the same. For that is really the third week, which begins on the evening of the fourteenth day, and ends on the evening of the one-and-twentieth.

§ 431. "But after Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, and has made the Lord's day (which among the ancients was called the first after the sabbath) a solemn day to us by the joy of his resurrection, the apostolic tradition has so inserted it into the paschal festivals as to decree, that nothing in the least be anticipated, or detracted from the time of the legal passover; but rather it ordains, that the same first month of the year should be waited for, pursuant to the precept of the law, and in like manner also the fourteenth day of the same, and the evening thereof. And when this day should happen to fall on the sabbath, every one in his family and household should take a lamb, and kill it in the evening, that is, that all the churches throughout the world, composing one catholic church, should provide bread and wine for the mystery of the flesh and blood of the unspotted Lamb 'who took away the sins of the world;' and after the appropriate solemnity of reading the lessons and prayers of the paschal ceremonies, they should offer up these

things to the Lord, in the hope of their future redemption. For that same night in which the people of Israel were delivered out of Egypt by the blood of the Lamb, is the very same in which all the people of God were, by Christ's resurrection, delivered from eternal death. Then, on the morning of the Lord's day, they should celebrate the first day of the paschal festival; for that is the day on which our Lord, with much joy of pious revelation, made known to his disciples the glory of his resurrection. The same is the first day of unleavened bread, concerning which it is distinctly written in Leviticus, 'In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, at even, is the Lord's passover. And on the fifteenth day of this month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord; seven days ye must eat unleavened bread; the first day shall be most solemn and holy.' [Levit. xxiii. 5.]

§ 432. "If, therefore, it could so be that the Lord's day should always happen on the fifteenth day of the first month, that is, on the fifteenth moon, we might always celebrate Easter at the very same time with the ancient people of God, though the nature of the mystery be different, as we do it with one and the same faith. But in regard that the day of the week does not keep pace exactly with the moon, the apostolical tradition, which was preached at Rome by the blessed Peter, and confirmed at Alexandria by Mark the evangelist, his intrepreter,[1] appointed that when the first month was come, and in it the evening of the fourteenth day, we should also wait for the Lord's day, which falls between the fifteenth and the one-and-twentieth day of the same month. For on whichever of those days it shall fall, Easter will be properly kept on the same; as it is one of the number of those seven days on which the unleavened bread is ordered to be kept. Thus it comes to pass that our Easter never deviates to the one side or the other from the third week of the first month, but either observes the whole, that is, all the seven legal days of unleavened bread, or at least some of them. For though it takes in but one of them, that is, the seventh, which the Scripture so highly commends, saying, 'But the seventh day shall be more solemn and holy, ye shall do no servile work therein,' [Exod. xii. 16,] none can lay it to our charge, that we do not rightly keep our Lord's paschal day, which we received from the gospel, in the third week of the first month, as the law prescribes.

§ 433. "The catholic reason of this observance being thus explained; the unreasonable error, on the other hand, is manifest, of those who, without any necessity, presume either to anticipate, or to go beyond, the term prescribed in the law. For they who think the Lord's day of Easter is to be observed from the fourteenth day of the first month till the twentieth moon, anticipate the time prescribed in the law, without any necessary reason; for when they begin to celebrate the vigils of the holy night from the evening of the thirteenth day, it is plain that they make that day the beginning of their Easter, whereof they find no mention whatever in the law; and when they refuse to celebrate our Lord's Easter on the one-

[1] See Euseb. H. E. ii. 15.

and-twentieth day of the month, it is equally clear that they wholly exclude that day from their solemnity, which the law often recommends as memorable for the greater festival above the rest. Thus, perverting the proper order, they place Easter-day in the second week, and sometimes keep it entirely in the same, and never bring it to the seventh day of the third week. And again, because they rather think that Easter is to be kept on the sixteenth day of the said month, and so to the two-and-twentieth, they no less erroneously, though on the contrary side, deviate from the right way of truth, and as it were avoiding to be shipwrecked on Scylla, they fall into and are drowned in the whirlpool of Charybdis. For when they teach that Easter is to be begun at the rising of the sixteenth moon of the first month, that is, from the evening of the fifteenth day, it is manifest that they altogether exclude from their solemnity the fourteenth day of the same month, which the law firstly and chiefly recommends; so that they scarcely touch upon the evening of the fifteenth day, on which the people of God were delivered from the Egyptian bondage, and on which our Lord, by his blood, rescued the world from the darkness of sin, and on which being also buried, He gave us hope of a blessed repose after death.

§ 434. "And the same persons, receiving in themselves the penalty of their error, when they place the Lord's day of Easter on the twenty-second day of the month, openly transgress and exceed the legal term of Easter, as beginning the Easter on the evening of that day in which the law appointed it to be finished and completed; and appoint that to be the first day of Easter, whereof no mention is any where found in the law, viz. the first of the fourth week. And they are sometimes mistaken, not only in defining and computing the moon's age, but also in finding the first month: but this controversy is longer than can or ought to be contained in this letter. I will only say thus much, that by the vernal equinox may always be found, without the chance of any error, which is the first month of the year, according to the lunar calculation, and which the last. But the equinox, according to the opinion of all the eastern nations, and particularly of the Egyptians, who excel all other learned men in that calculation, usually happens on the twelfth day of the kalends of April [21st March], as we also prove by horological inspection. Whatever moon therefore is at the full before the equinox, being on the fourteenth or fifteenth day, the same belongs to the last month of the foregoing year, and consequently is not proper for the celebration of Easter. But that moon which is full after the equinox, or on the very equinox itself, belongs to the first month, and in it, without a doubt, the ancients were wont to celebrate the passover, because it was the equinox of the first month; and we also ought to keep Easter when the Sunday comes. And that this must be so, there is this cogent reason, because it is written in Genesis, that 'God made two lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night.' [Gen. i. 16.] Or, as another edition[1] has it, 'A greater light to

[1] Beda does not notice this difference between the versions in his Commentary upon this passage of Genesis.

begin the day, and a lesser to begin the night.' The sun, therefore, proceeding from the midst of the east, fixed the vernal equinox by his rising; and afterwards the moon, when the sun set in the evening, she herself being at the full, followed from the midst of the east: thus every year the same first month of the moon must be observed in the like order, and not before the equinox, so that the full moon must be either on the very day of the equinox, as was done from the beginning, or after it is gone by. But if the full of the moon shall happen to be but one day before the time of the equinox, the aforesaid reason proves that such moon is not to be assigned to the first month of the new year, but rather to the last of the preceding, and that it is therefore not proper for the celebration of the paschal festival.

§ 435. "Now if it will please you likewise to hear the mystical reason in this matter, we are commanded to keep Easter in the first month of the year, which is also called the month of the new fruit, because we are to celebrate the mysteries of our Lord's resurrection and our deliverance, with our minds renewed to the love of heavenly things. We are commanded to keep it in the third week of the same month, because Christ, who had been promised before the law, and under the law, came with grace, in the third age of the world, to be slain as our passover; and rising from the dead the third day after the offering of his passion, it was his pleasure that this should be called the Lord's day, and that the festival of his resurrection should be yearly celebrated on the same. For we also, in this manner only, can truly celebrate his solemnity, if we take care with him to keep the passover, that is, the passage out of this world to the Father, by faith, hope, and charity. We are commanded to observe the full moon of the paschal month after the vernal equinox, to the end, that the sun may first make the day longer than the night, and then the moon may afford to the world her full orb of light; inasmuch as first the Sun of righteousness, in whose wings is salvation, that is, our Lord Jesus, by the triumph of his resurrection, overcame all the darkness of death, and so ascending into heaven, filled his church, which is often signified by the name of the moon, with the light of inward grace, by sending down his Spirit. Which plan of salvation the prophet had in his mind, when he said, 'The sun was exalted, and the moon stood in her order.'

§ 436. "He, therefore, who shall contend that the full paschal moon can happen before the equinox, deviates from the doctrine of the holy Scriptures, in the celebration of the greatest mysteries, and agrees with those who venture to believe that they may be saved without the preventing grace of Christ, and who presume to teach that they might have attained to perfect righteousness, though the true Light had never vanquished the darkness of the world, by dying and rising again. Thus, after the equinoctial rising of the sun, and after the subsequent full moon of the first month, that is, after the end of the fourteenth day of the same month, all which, according to the law, ought to be observed, we still, by the instruction of the gospel, wait in the third week itself for the Lord's day; and thus, at length, we celebrate our due Easter solemnity, to show that we do not, with the ancients, honour the shaking off of the Egyptian yoke;

but that, with devout faith and affection, we worship the redemption of the whole world; which having been prefigured in the deliverance of God's ancient people, was completed in Christ's resurrection, to make it appear that we rejoice in the sure and certain hope of the day of our own resurrection, which we believe will happen on the same Lord's day.

§ 437. "Now this calculation of Easter, which we show you is to be followed, is contained in a cycle of nineteen years, which began long since, that is, in the very times of the apostles, especially at Rome and in Egypt, as has been said above. But by the industry of Eusebius, who took his surname from the blessed martyr Pamphilius, it was reduced to a plainer system; insomuch that what till then used to be sent about to all the several churches by the patriarch of Alexandria, might, from that time forward, be most easily known by all men, the course of the fourteenth day of the moon being regularly ordered. This paschal calculation, Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria, composed for the emperor Theodosius, for a hundred years to come. Cyril also, his successor, comprised a series of ninety-five years in five revolutions of nineteen years. After whom, Dionysius Exiguus added as many more, in the same manner, reaching down to our own time. The expiration of these is now drawing near, but there is so great a number of calculators, that even in our churches throughout Britain, there are many who, having committed to memory the ancient rules of the Egyptians, can with great ease carry on those revolutions of the paschal times for any distant number of years, even to five hundred and thirty-two years, if they will; after the expiration of which, all that belongs to the succession of the sun and moon, of month and week, returns in the same order as before. We therefore forbear to send you those revolutions of the times to come, because you only desired to be instructed respecting the paschal time, and declared you had enough of those catholic tables concerning Easter.

§ 438. "But having said thus much briefly and succinctly, as you required, concerning Easter, I also exhort you to take care to promote the tonsure,[1] so that it be ecclesiastical and agreeable to the Christian faith; for concerning that also you desired me to write to you. We know, indeed, that even the apostles were not all shorn after one and the same manner, nor does the catholic church, though it agrees in the same divine faith, hope, and charity, now agree in one and the same form of tonsure throughout the world. In short, to look back to remote times, that is, the times of the patriarchs, Job, the example of patience, when on the approach of tribulation he shaved his head, made it appear that he had used, in time of prosperity, to let his hair grow; and we read that Joseph, the great practiser and teacher of chastity, humility, piety, and other virtues, was shorn when he was to be delivered from servitude; by which it appears, that during the time of servitude, he was in the prison without cutting his hair. Now you may observe how each of these men of God differed in

[1] Much curious information respecting these rival modes of tonsure has been collected by Ussher. Brit. Eccl. Antiq. pp. 477, 478.

the manner of his external appearance, though their inward consciences were alike influenced by the grace of virtue.

§ 439. "But though we may be free to confess, that the difference of tonsure is not hurtful to those whose faith is pure towards God, and whose charity is sincere towards their neighbour, especially since we do not read that there ever was any controversy among the catholic fathers about the difference of tonsure, as there has been about the difference in keeping Easter, or in matters of faith; however, among all the tonsures that are to be found in the church, or among mankind at large, I think none more worthy of being followed than that which that disciple had on his head, to whom, on his confession, our Lord said, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven.' [Matt. xvi. 18.] Nor do I think that there is any tonsure more worthy to be abhorred and detested, by all the faithful, than that which that man used, to whom Peter, when he would have bought the grace of the Holy Ghost, said, 'Thy money be with thee to perdition, because thou thoughtest the gift of God to be purchased for money; there is no part or lot for thee in this speech.' [Acts viii. 20, 21.] Nor do we shave ourselves in the form of a crown only because Peter was so shorn; but because Peter was so shorn in memory of the passion of our Lord; therefore we also, who desire to be saved by the same passion, do with him bear the sign of the same passion on the top of our head, which is the highest part of our body. For as all the church, because it was made the church by the death of Him that gave it life, is wont to bear the sign of his holy cross on the forehead, to the end that it may, by the constant protection of his sign, be defended from the assaults of evil spirits, and by the frequent admonition of the same be instructed, in like manner, to crucify its flesh with its vices and concupiscences; so also it behoves those who have either taken the vows of a monk, or have any order among the clergy, to curb themselves the more strictly by continence for the Lord.

§ 440. "Every one of them is likewise to bear on his head, by means of the tonsure, the form of the crown of thorns which Christ in his passion bore, in order that Christ may bear the thorns and briers of our sins; that is, that He may remove them and take them from us; and also that they may at once show, even on their forehead, that they are willing, with a ready mind, to endure scoffs and reproaches for his sake; to make it appear, that they always expect 'the crown of eternal life, which God has promised to those that love him,' [James i. 12,] and that for the gaining thereof they despise both the adversities and the prosperities of this world. But as for the tonsure which Simon Magus is said to have used, what Christian will not immediately detest and cast it off together with his magic? Upon the top of the forehead, it does seem indeed to resemble a crown; but when you come in your inspection to the neck, you will find the crown you thought you had seen so perfect, cut short; so that you may be satisfied such a distinction properly belongs not to Christians, but to Simoniacs, such as were indeed in this life thought

worthy of a perpetual crown of glory by erring men; but in that life which is to follow this, are not only deprived of all hope of a crown, but are moreover condemned to eternal punishment.

§ 441. "But do not think that I have said thus much, as judging that those who use this tonsure are to be damned, provided they favour the catholic unity in faith and actions; on the contrary, I confidently declare, that many of them have been holy and worthy of God. Of which number is Adamnan,[1] the abbat and renowned priest of the adherents of Columba, who, when sent ambassador by his nation to king Aldfrid, came desiring to see our monastery; and on his discovering wonderful wisdom, humility, and religion in his behaviour and words, among other things, I said to him in discourse, 'I beseech you, holy brother, who think you are advancing to the crown of life, which knows no end, why do you, contrary to the habit of your faith, wear on your head the representation of a crown which has an end? And if you aim at the society of the blessed Peter, why do you imitate the form of the tonsure of him whom Peter anathematized? and why do you not rather even now show that you imitate to your utmost the usage of him with whom you desire to live happy for ever?' He answered, 'Be assured, my dear brother, that though I have Simon's tonsure, according to the custom of my country, yet I detest and abhor with all my mind the Simoniacal wickedness; and I desire, as far as my littleness is capable of doing it, to follow the footsteps of the most blessed prince of the apostles.' I replied, 'I verily believe it to be as you say; but let this appear by showing outwardly such things as you know to be the things of the apostle Peter, that in the inmost recesses of your heart you embrace whatever is from Peter the apostle. For I believe your wisdom does easily judge, that it is much more proper to estrange your countenance, already dedicated to God, from resemblance to him whom in your heart you abhor, and of whose hideous face you would shun the sight; and, on the other hand, that it becomes you to imitate the outward resemblance of him, whom you seek to have for your advocate with God, as you desire to follow his actions and instructions.'

§ 442. "This I then said to Adamnan, who indeed gave proof how much progress he had made upon seeing the statutes of our churches, when, returning into Scotland, he afterwards by his preaching brought great crowds of that nation over to the catholic observance of the paschal time; though he was not yet able to reduce to the way of a better observance the monks who lived in the island of Hii, over whom especially he presided as governor. He would also have been mindful to amend the tonsure, if his authority had extended so far.

§ 443. "But I also admonish your wisdom, O king, that you yourself endeavour to make the nation over which the King of kings, and Lord of lords, has placed you, to observe in all points those things which appertain to the unity of the catholic and apostolic church; for thus it will come to pass, that after your temporal kingdom has passed away, the most blessed prince of the

[1] See §§ 402, 403.

apostles will lay open to you and yours an entrance into the heavenly kingdom, together with the other elect. May the grace of the eternal King preserve you in safety, long reigning, for the peace of us all, my most beloved son in Christ."

§ 444. This letter having been read in the presence of king Naiton and many others of the most learned men, and carefully interpreted into his own language by those who could understand it, he is said to have much rejoiced at the exhortation; insomuch that, rising from among his great men that sat about him, he knelt on the ground, giving thanks to God that he had been found worthy to receive such a present from the land of the Angles; and, said he, "I knew indeed before, that this was the true celebration of Easter, but now I so fully know the reason for the observance of this time, that I seem convinced that I knew very little of it before. Therefore I publicly declare and protest to you who are here present, that I will for ever continually observe this time of Easter, together with all my nation; and I do decree that this tonsure, which we have heard is most reasonable, shall be received by all the clergy in my kingdom." Accordingly he immediately performed by his regal authority what he had said. For the cycles of nineteen years were forthwith, by public command, sent throughout all the provinces of the Picts to be transcribed, learned, and observed, the erroneous revolutions of eighty-four years[1] being everywhere obliterated. All the ministers of the altar and monks had the crown shorn; and the nation being thus reformed, rejoiced, as being newly placed under the direction of Peter, the most blessed prince of the apostles, and made secure under his protection.

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Chap. XXII. [A.D. 716—729.]—How the Monks of Hii, and the Monasteries subject to them, began to celebrate the canonical Easter at the Preaching of Ecgberct.

§ 445. Not long[2] after, those monks also of the Scottish nation, who lived in the isle of Hii, with the other monasteries that were subject to them, were, by the procurement of our Lord, brought to the canonical observation of Easter, and the right mode of tonsure. For in the year after the incarnation of our Lord 716, when, Osred having been slain, Coenred[3] took upon himself the government of the kingdom of the Northumbrians,—the father and priest, Ecgberct, beloved of God, and worthy to be named with all honour, (whom we have often mentioned before,) coming to them from

[1] It is probable that a vigorous effort was made about this time for accomplishment of the object which Ecgberct had so much at heart, inasmuch as a new revolution of the cycle of eighty-four years would commence A.D. 718. See Ussher, ad an.

[2] The Annals of Ulster, as quoted by Ussher, agree with Beda in assigning this event to A.D. 716; and add that it took place on Saturday, 29th August, which seems highly probable, since upon that day the feast of the decollation of St. John the Baptist is celebrated. See Brit. Eccl. Antiq. p. 367.

[3] Coenred reigned from A.D. 716 to 718.

Ireland, was very honourably and joyfully received by them. Being a most agreeable teacher, and most devout in practising those things which he taught, he was willingly heard by all;[1] and, by his pious and frequent exhortations, he converted them from that inveterate tradition of their ancestors, of whom may be said those words of the apostle, "That they had the zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." [Rom. x. 2.] He taught them to perform the principal solemnity [of Easter] after the catholic and apostolic manner, as has been said, under the figure of a perpetual circle; which appears to have been accomplished by a wonderful dispensation of the divine goodness; to the end, that the same[2] nation, which had willingly and without envy communicated to the English people the knowledge of the true Deity, should afterwards, by means of the English nation, be brought, in those points in which they were defective, to the true rule of life. Even as, on the contrary, the Britons, who would not acquaint the English with the knowledge of the Christian faith, which they themselves possessed, now, when the English people enjoy the true faith, and are thoroughly instructed in its rules, continue even yet inveterate in their errors and halt from the right path, expose their heads without a crown, and keep the solemnity of Christ without the society of the church of Christ.

§ 446. The monks of Hii, by the instruction of Ecgberct, adopted the catholic rites, under abbat Duunchad,[3] about eighty[4] years after they had sent bishop Aidan to preach to the nation of the Angles. This man of God, Ecgberct, remained thirteen years in the aforesaid island, which he had thus consecrated again to Christ, by kindling in it a new ray of divine grace, and restoring it to ecclesiastical unity and peace. In the year of our Lord's incarnation 729, in which the Easter of our Lord was celebrated on the eighth of the kalends of May [24th April], when he had performed the solemnity of the mass, in memory of the same resurrection of our Lord, on that same day he departed to the Lord; and thus finished, or rather never ceases to celebrate, with our Lord, the apostles, and the other citizens of heaven, the joy of that greatest festival, which he had begun with the brethren, whom he had converted to the grace of unity. But it was a wonderful provision of the divine dispensation, that the venerable man not only passed out of this world to the Father at Easter, but also when Easter was celebrated on that day, on which it had never been wont to be kept in those

[1] Beda appears here to have been misinformed as to the complete success of Ecgberct's ministry; for the Annals of Ulster state that in A.D. 717 the monks of Iona were expelled beyond Drum Alban [Dorsum Britanniæ] by king Nectan, (the Naiton of the text,) from which circumstance we may conclude that he found them more stubborn in their faith than Beda imagined. See Brit. Eccl. Antiq. p. 367.

[2] Beda here alludes to the fact that Christianity had been introduced from Iona into Northumbria, § 155, after the British Christians had refused to join Augustine and his companions in their mission for that purpose, § 93.

[3] He was abbot of Iona from A.D. 710 to 717. See Ussher, p. 367.

[4] If the mission of Aidan be dated from 635, this calculation will give us A.D. 715 for the adoption of the Roman mode of celebrating Easter by the monks of Iona.

parts. The brethren therefore rejoiced in the certain and catholic knowledge of the time of Easter, and rejoiced in the protection of their father, departed to our Lord, by whom they had been corrected. He also rejoiced that he had been so long continued in the flesh till he should see his followers admit, and celebrate with him, that as Easter day which they had ever before avoided. Thus the most reverend father being assured of their correction, rejoiced to see the day of our Lord, and he saw it and was glad.

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CHAP. XXIII. [A.D. 725—731.]—OF THE PRESENT STATE OF THE ENGLISH NATION, AND OF ALL BRITAIN.

§ 447. IN the year of our Lord's incarnation 725, being the seventh year of Osric, king of the Northumbrians, who succeeded Coenred, Uictred, the son of Ecgberct, king of Kent, died on the ninth of the kalends of May [23d April], and left his three sons, Aedilberct,[1] Eadberct, and Alric, heirs[2] of that kingdom, which he had governed thirty-four years and a half. The next year [A.D. 726] died Tobias, bishop of the church of Rochester, a most learned man, as has been said before;[3] for he was disciple to those teachers of blessed memory, Theodore, the archbishop, and abbat Hadrian; by whose means, as we have before observed, besides his erudition in ecclesiastical and general literature, he had learned both the Greek and Latin tongues to such perfection, that they were as well known and familiar to him as his native language. He was buried in the porch of St. Paul the apostle, which he had built within the church of St. Andrew for his own place of burial. After him Alduulf took upon him the office of bishop, having been consecrated by archbishop Berctuald.

§ 448. In the year of our Lord's incarnation 729, two comets appeared about the sun, to the great terror of the beholders. One of them went before the rising sun in the morning, the other followed him when he set at night, as it were presaging much destruction both to the east and west; one assuredly was the forerunner of the day, and the other of the night, to signify that mortals were threatened with calamities at both times. They carried their flaming tails towards the north, as it were ready to set the world on fire. They appeared in January, and continued nearly a fortnight. At which time a dreadful plague of the Saracens ravaged Gaul with miserable slaughter; but they not long[4] after in that

[1] He addressed a letter to Boniface, which may be seen among the epistles of that writer.

[2] They successively filled the throne of the kingdom of Kent, Eadbert from 725 to 748; Ethelbert the Second from 748 to 760; and Alric from that year until 794.

[3] See § 375.

[4] It is certain that Beda terminated his history in A.D. 731, and it is equally certain that the first success which Charles Martel gained over the Saracens occurred in the month of October, 732, (see Chron. Fontanell., ap. Bouquet, ii. 661; Pagi ad an. 732, § 1;) Beda, therefore, must have added this passage after his History had been completed, and before its circulation.

country received the punishment due to their wickedness. In which year the holy man of God, Ecgberct, departed to our Lord, as has been said above,[1] on Easter day; and immediately after Easter, that is, on the seventh of the ides of May [9th May], Osric, king of the Northumbrians, departed this life, after he had reigned eleven years, and appointed Ceoluulf, brother to Coenred, who had reigned before him, his successor; the beginning and progress of whose reign were filled with so many and great adversities and commotions, that it cannot yet be known what is to be said concerning them, or what end each of them will have.

§ 449. In the year of our Lord's incarnation 731, archbishop Berctuald died of old age, on the day of the ides of January [13th Jan.], having held his see thirty-seven years, six months and fourteen days. In his stead, the same year, Tatuini, of the province of the Mercians, was made archbishop, having been a priest in the monastery called Briudun.[2] He was consecrated in the city of Canterbury by the venerable men, Danihel, bishop of Winchester, Inguald of London, Alduin of Lichfield, and Alduulf of Rochester, on Sunday, the 10th of June, being a man renowned for religion and wisdom, and notably learned in sacred writ.

§ 450. Thus at present,[3] the bishops Tatuini and Alduulf preside over the churches of Kent; Inguald in the province of the East Saxons. In the province of the East Angles, Aldberct and Hadulac are bishops; in the province of the West Saxons, Danihel and Fortheri are bishops; in the province of the Mercians, Alduini. Among those people who live beyond the river Severn to the westward, Ualchstod is bishop; in the province of the Huiccians, Uilfrid; in the province of the Lindisfari, Cyniberct presides; the bishopric of the Isle of Wight[4] belongs to Danihel, bishop of Winchester. The province of the South Saxons, having now continued some years without a bishop, receives the episcopal ministry from the prelate of the West Saxons. All these provinces, and the

[1] See § 446.

[2] Bredone, in Worcestershire, a monastery founded by Eanwulf, the grandfather of Offa. Monast. Anglic. i. 122.

[3] It may be convenient to reduce to a tabular form the information here given by Beda as to the actual condition of the English church at the period when he ended his History.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| The see of | Canterbury | occupied by | Tatuini. |
| ,, | Rochester | ,, | Alduulf. |
| ,, | East Saxony | ,, | Inguald (London). |
| ,, | East Anglia | ,, | Aldberct (Dunwich). |
| ,, | | ,, | Hadulac (Elmham). |
| ,, | Wessex | ,, | Daniel (Winchester). |
| ,, | | ,, | Fortheri (Sherburn). |
| ,, | Mercia | ,, | Alduini, surnamed Wor (Lichfield). |
| ,, | | ,, | Walchstod (Hereford). |
| ,, | | ,, | Wilfrid (Worcester). |
| ,, | | ,, | Cyniberct (Sidnacester). |
| ,, | Sussex | ,, | *Vacant* (Dorchester and Selsey). |
| ,, | York | ,, | Wilfrid II. |
| ,, | Lindisfarn | ,, | Ediluald. |
| ,, | Hexham | ,, | Acca. |
| ,, | Whithern | ,, | Pecthelm. |

[4] See § 298.

others southward to the bank of the river Humber, with their kings, are subject to Aedilbald, king of the Mercians.

§ 451. But in the province of the Northumbrians, where king Ceoluulf reigns, four bishops now preside; Uilfrid in the church of York, Ediluald in that of Lindisfarne, Acca in that of Hagustald, Pecthelm in that which is called the White House, which, from the increased number of believers, has lately become an additional episcopal see, and has him for its first[1] prelate. The Picts also at this time have a treaty of peace with the nation of the Angles, and rejoice in being united in catholic peace and truth with the universal church. The Scots that inhabit Britain, satisfied with their own territories, meditate no plots or conspiracies against the nation of the Angles. The Britons, though they, for the most part, through domestic hatred, are adverse to the nation of the Angles, and wrongfully, and from wicked custom, oppose the appointed Easter of the whole catholic church; yet, from both the Divine and human power firmly withstanding them, they can in no way prevail as they desire; for though in part they are their own masters, yet partly they are also brought under subjection to the English. Such being the peaceable and calm disposition of the times, many of the Northumbrian nation, as well of the nobility as private persons, laying aside their weapons, incline to accept the tonsure, and to dedicate both themselves and their children to monastic vows, rather than to exercise themselves in the study of military matters. What will be the end hereof, the next age will show. This is for the present the state of all Britain; in the year since the coming of the Angles into Britain about 285, but in the 731st year of the incarnation of our Lord; in whose reign may the earth ever rejoice; may Britain exult in the profession of his faith; and may many islands be glad, and confess to the memory of his holiness!

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### Chap. XXIV.—A Chronological Recapitulation of the whole Work: also concerning the Author himself.

§ 452. I have thought fit briefly to sum up, according to the distinction of times, those things which have been related more at large, for their better preservation in memory.

In the sixtieth year before the incarnation of our Lord, Caius Julius Cæsar,[2] first of the Romans, invaded Britain, and was victorious, yet could not gain the kingdom.

In the year from the incarnation of our Lord 46, Claudius,[3] second of the Romans, invading Britain, had a great part of the island surrendered to him, and added the Orkney islands to the Roman empire.

In the year from the incarnation of our Lord 167, Eleuther, being made bishop of Rome, governed the church most gloriously for fifteen years. Lucius,[4] king of Britain, sending letters to him,

[1] Its first bishop, that is, after its restoration under the kings of Northumbria.
[2] See § 9. [3] See § 10. [4] See § 12.

requested to be made a Christian, and succeeded in obtaining his request.

In the year from the incarnation of our Lord 189, Severus[1] being made emperor, reigned seventeen years; he enclosed Britain with a trench from sea to sea.

In the year 381, Maximus,[2] being made emperor in Britain, sailed over into Gaul, and slew Gratian.

In the year 409, Rome was taken by the Goths;[3] from which time the Roman emperors ceased to reign in Britain.

In the year 430, Palladius[4] was sent, by pope Celestine, to be the first bishop of the Scots that believed in Christ.

In the year 449, Martian[5] being made emperor with Valentinian, reigned seven years; in whose time the English, being called by the Britons, came into Britain.

In the year 538, there happened an eclipse of the sun, on the fourteenth of the kalends of March [16th Feb.], from the first to the third hour.

In the year 540, an eclipse of the sun happened on the twelfth of the kalends of July [20th June], and the stars appeared during almost half an hour after the third hour of the day.

In the year 547, Ida began to reign; from him the royal family of the Northumbrians derives its original; he reigned twelve years.

In the year 565, the priest, Columba,[6] came out of Scotland into Britain, to instruct the Picts, and he built a monastery in the isle of Hii.

In the year 596, pope Gregory[7] sent Augustine with monks into Britain, to preach the word of God to the English nation.

In the year 597, the aforesaid teachers[8] arrived in Britain; being about the 150th year from the coming of the English into Britain.

In the year 601, pope Gregory sent the pall[9] into Britain, to Augustine, who was already made bishop; he sent also several ministers of the Word, among whom was Paulinus.

In the year 603, a battle was fought at Degsastanae.[10]

In the year 604, the East Saxons received the faith of Christ, under king Saberct,[11] Mellitus[12] being bishop.

In the year 605, Gregory died.[13]

In the year 616, Aedilberct,[14] king of Kent, died.

In the year 625, Paulinus[15] was, by archbishop Justus, ordained bishop of the nation of the Northumbrians.

In the year 626, Eanfled,[16] daughter to king Aeduini, was baptized, with twelve others, on the Saturday of Pentecost.

In the year 627, king Aeduini was baptized,[17] with his nation, at Easter.

In the year 633, king Aeduini being killed, Paulinus returned to Kent.[18]

In the year 640, Eadbald,[19] king of Kent, died.

[1] See § 13. [2] See § 24. [3] See § 27. [4] See § 32. [5] See § 35.
[6] See § 158. [7] See § 51. [8] See § 54. [9] See § 73. [10] See § 80.
[11] See § 103. [12] See § 95. [13] See § 81. [14] See § 100. [15] See § 112.
[16] See § 114. [17] See § 132. [18] See § 148. [19] See § 172.

In the year 642, king Osuald[1] was slain.

In the year 644, Paulinus,[2] formerly bishop of York, but now of the city of Rochester, departed to our Lord.

In the year 651, king Osuini[3] was killed, and bishop Aidan[4] died.

In the year 653, the Midland[5] Angles, under their prince, Penda, received the mysteries of the faith.

In the year 655, Penda[6] perished, and the Mercians became Christians.

In the year 664, there happened an eclipse;[7] Earconberct,[8] king of Kent, died; and Colman,[9] with the Scots, returned to his own people; a pestilence arose; Ceadda and Uilfrid were ordained bishops of the Northumbrians.[10]

In the year 668, Theodore[11] was ordained bishop.

In the year 670, Osuiu,[12] king of the Northumbrians, died.

In the year 673, Ecgberct,[13] king of Kent, died, and a synod was held at Herutford,[14] in the presence of king Ecgfrid, archbishop Theodore presiding: the synod did much good, and its decrees are contained in ten chapters.

In the year 675, Uulfheri, king of the Mercians, dying, when he had reigned seventeen years, left the crown to his brother Aedilred.

In the year 676, Aedilred[15] ravaged Kent.

In the year 678, a comet[16] appeared; bishop Uilfrid was driven from his see by king Ecgfrid; and Bosa, Eata, and Eadhaeth were consecrated bishops in his stead.

In the year 679, Aelfuini[17] was killed.

In the year 680, a synod was held in the field called Haethfeld,[18] concerning the catholic faith, archbishop Theodore presiding; John,[19] the Roman abbat, was also present. The same year also the abbess Hild[20] died at Streanaeshalch.

In the year 685, Ecgfrid,[21] king of the Northumbrians, was slain.

The same year, Hlotheri,[22] king of Kent, died.

In the year 688, Caedwald,[23] king of the West Saxons, went to Rome from Britain.

In the year 690, archbishop Theodore[24] died.

In the year 697, queen Osthryd was murdered by her own people, that is, the nobility of the Mercians.

In the year 698, Berctred, the royal commander of the Northumbrians, was slain by the Picts.

In the year 704, Aedilred[25] became a monk, after he had reigned thirty-one years over the nation of the Mercians, and gave up the kingdom to Coenred.

In the year 705, Aldfrid,[26] king of the Northumbrians, died.

In the year 709, Coenred,[27] king of the Mercians, having reigned five years, went to Rome.

[1] See § 175. [2] See § 187. [3] See § 188. [4] See § 190.
[5] See § 210. [6] See § 221. [7] See § 240. [8] See § 252.
[9] See § 236. [10] See § 243. [11] See § 254. [12] See § 267.
[13] See § 271. [14] See § 268. [15] See § 287. [16] See § 288.
[17] See § 316. [18] See § 301. [19] See § 305. [20] See § 322.
[21] See § 340. [22] See § 342. [23] See § 372. [24] See § 374.
[25] See §§ 397, 424. [26] See § 409. [27] See § 412.

In the year 711, the prefect Berctfrid fought with the Picts.

In the year 716, Osred,[1] king of the Northumbrians, was killed; and Ceolred, king of the Mercians, died; and Ecgberct,[2] the man of God, reformed the monks of Hii so as to observe the catholic Easter and ecclesiastical tonsure.

In the year 725, Uictred,[3] king of Kent, died.

In the year 729, comets[4] appeared; the holy Ecgberct[4] departed; and Osric[4] died.

In the year 731, archbishop Berctuald[5] died.

The same year Tatuini[6] was consecrated ninth archbishop of the church of Canterbury, in the fifteenth year of Aedilbald, king of the Mercians.

§ 453. Thus much of the Ecclesiastical History of Britain, and more especially of the English nation, as far as I could learn either from the writings of the ancients, or the tradition of our ancestors, or of my own knowledge, has, with the help of God, been digested by me, Baeda, the servant of Christ, and priest of the monastery of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, which is at "Viuraemuda" and "Ingyruum."

§ 454. Being born in the territory of that same monastery, I was given, by the care of my relatives, at seven years of age, to be educated by the most reverend abbat Benedict, and afterwards by Ceolfrid; and from that period, spending all the remaining time of my life in that monastery, I wholly applied myself to the study of the Scriptures; and amidst the observance of regular discipline, and the daily care of singing in the church, I always took delight in learning, teaching, and writing. In the nineteenth year of my age I received deacon's orders; in the thirtieth, those of the priesthood; both of them by the ministry of the most reverend bishop John, and by order of the abbat Ceolfrid. From which time, when I received the order of priesthood, till the fifty-ninth year of my age, I have made it my business, for the use of me and mine, briefly to compile out of the works of the venerable Fathers, and to interpret and explain according to their meaning, (adding somewhat of my own,) these following pieces:—

§ 455. On the Beginning of Genesis, to the Nativity of Isaac and the Rejection of Ishmael, four books.

Of the Tabernacle and its Vessels, and of the Vestments of the Priests, three books.

On the First Part of Samuel, that is, to the Death of Saul, three books.

Of the Building of the Temple, two books of Allegorical Exposition, like the rest.

Also, on the Book of Kings, thirty Questions.

On Solomon's Proverbs, three books.

[1] See § 445. [2] See § 445. [3] See § 447. [4] See § 448.
[5] See § 449. [6] See § 449.

On the Canticles, seven books.

On Isaiah, Daniel, the twelve Prophets, and part of Jeremiah, Distinctions of Chapters, collected out of the blessed Jerome's Treatise.

On Ezra and Nehemiah, three books.

On the Song of Habacuc, one book.

On the Book of the blessed Father Tobias, one book of Allegorical Explanation concerning Christ and the Church.

Also, Chapters of Lessons on Moses's Pentateuch, Joshua, and Judges.

On the Books of Kings and Chronicles.

On the Book of the blessed Father Job.

On the Parables, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles.

On the Prophets Isaiah, Ezra, and Nehemiah.

On the Gospel of Mark, four books.

On the Gospel of Luke, six books.

Of Homilies on the Gospel, two books.

On the Apostle, I have carefully transcribed in order all that I have found in St. Augustine's Works.

On the Acts of the Apostles, two books.

On the Seven Catholic Epistles, a book on each.

On the Revelation of St. John, three books.

Also, Chapters of Lessons on all the New Testament, except the Gospel.

Also a book of Epistles to different Persons, of which one is of the Six Ages of the World; one, of the Stations of the Children of Israel; one, on the Words of Isaiah, "And they shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited;" one, of the Reason of the Bissextile [or Leap-year]; and one, of the Equinox, according to Anatolius.

Also, of the Histories of Saints; I translated into prose the book of the Life and Passion of St. Felix, Confessor, from Paulinus's work in metre.

The Book of the Life and Passion of St. Anastasius, which was ill translated from the Greek, and worse amended by some unskilful person, I have corrected, as well as I was able, as to the sense.

I have written the Life of the Holy Father Cudberct, who was both monk and prelate, first in heroic verse, and then in prose.

The History of the Abbats of this Monastery, in which I rejoice to serve the Divine Goodness, viz. Benedict, Ceolfrid, and Huactberct, in two books.

The Ecclesiastical History of our Island and Nation, in five books.

The Martyrology of the Birth-days of the Holy Martyrs, in which I have carefully endeavoured to set down all that I could find, and not only on what day, but also by what sort of combat, or under what judge, they overcame the world.

A Book of Hymns, in several sorts of metre, or rhyme.

A Book of Epigrams, in heroic and elegiac verse.

Of the Nature of Things, and of Times, one book of each.

Also, of Times, one larger book.

A Book of Orthography, digested in Alphabetical Order.

Also a Book of the Art of Poetry, and to it I have added another little Book of Figures or Tropes; that is, of the figures and manners of speaking in which the Holy Scriptures are written.

And now I beseech Thee, good Jesus, that to whom Thou hast graciously granted sweetly to drink of the words of thy wisdom, Thou wilt also vouchsafe to him that he may in due time come to Thee, the Fountain of all wisdom, and always stand in thy presence, who livest and reignest world without end. Amen!

HERE ENDS, BY GOD'S HELP,
THE FIFTH BOOK
OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY
OF THE ENGLISH NATION.

THE

# LIFE AND MIRACLES OF SAINT CUDBERCT,

BISHOP OF LINDISFARNE.

## PREFACE.

*To the Holy and Most Blessed Father Eadfrid,*[1] *Bishop, and to all the Congregation of the Brethren, who serve Christ in the Island of Lindisfarne, Baeda, your faithful Fellow-servant, sendeth greeting:—*

§ 1. SINCE, beloved brethren, to the book which I composed at your request of the Life of our father Cudberct, of blessed memory, you bade me prefix, according to custom, some observations in the form of a preface, wherein the desire of your good pleasure, as well as the brotherly assent of my obedience thereto, should be publicly expressed to all readers, it seems good to me, before proceeding further, as well to remind you who know the events which I relate, as also to make known to others, who may read my work, and are perchance ignorant of what is here recorded, that I have neither presumed to write any circumstance relating to so great a man, without the most assured research, nor to give out for general transcription the things which I have reduced to writing, without the most scrupulous examination of indubitable witnesses. Yea, rather, it was not till I had diligently investigated the beginning, progress, and end of his most glorious life and conversation, from those who had known him, that I ventured to reduce aught to writing: and I may further add that I have also judged it meet to mention occasionally the names of these my authorities in the course of my work, as an unquestionable proof of the acknowledged truth of my narrative.

Moreover, after I had digested my little work, I kept it back in manuscript, and showed it frequently to our most reverend brother Herefrid,[2] the priest, when he came here, as well as to several other

[1] Eadfrid was bishop of Holy Island from A.D. 698 to 721, and has left a memorial as well of his elegant penmanship as of his love for the Holy Scriptures in the celebrated copy of the Gospels which is generally known as the Durham Book. It is preserved in the Cottonian Library, Nero D. iv. See Wanley's Catalogue, appended to Hickes's Thesaurus, p. 250. Smith asserts, but upon what authority does not appear, that this volume was written for the especial use of St. Cuthbert himself. It is gratifying to be able to state that it is about to be published by the Surtees Society.

[2] Beda could not easily have found a more competent critic than this Herefrid, for he was abbot of the monastery of Holy Island, § 13, and had attended Cuthbert during his last illness, § 59.

persons, who, from having long dwelt with the man of God, were thoroughly acquainted with his life, that they might read it, and deliberately correct or expunge what they should judge advisable. Some of these amendments I carefully adopted at their suggestion, as seemed good to me; and thus all scruples having been entirely removed, I have ventured to commit the result of this careful research, conveyed in simple language, to these few sheets of parchment. And when I transmitted to your presence, my brother, what I had written, that it might be either corrected if false, or approved if true, by the judgment of your authority; and whilst, by God's aid, I was so occupied, my little work was for the space of two days read before the ancients and teachers of your congregation; and after every part had been shrewdly weighed and had passed under your examination, it was found unnecessary to change any single word, and all that I had written was pronounced worthy by common consent to be read without any doubt, and fit to be handed over to the lovers of a religious life, to be by them transcribed. And, moreover, in the course of this investigation and discussion, it was shown, in my presence, that there were many other events relating to the life and miracles of the blessed servant of God, of no less moment than even those which we had recorded, which seemed worthy of being recorded, had it not appeared incongruous and unbecoming to insert them, or add new materials to a work already deliberated on and completed.

§ 2. Moreover, it occurred to me as fitting that I should remind your holy circle, that as I have not hesitated to pay the duty of obedience to the commands you have vouchsafed to give, you, in like manner, should not be slack in repaying to me the reward of your intercession: but that when you again read this little book, you may, by the pious remembrance of our most holy father, raise up your minds with greater ardour to the desire of the heavenly kingdom, and be mindful also to pray to the Divine Clemency for my poor estate, that I may now with pure mind desire, and for the time to come deserve, in perfect blessedness to "behold the good things of the Lord, in the land of the living;" and that when I am dead, you may vouchsafe for the redemption of my soul to pray for me, your friend and servant,—to offer masses for me, and to inscribe my name among those of your holy community. And do you also, most holy prelate, remember that you have already promised that this should be done; in testimony whereof, you have commanded Gudfrid,[1] the sacrist,[2] to inscribe my name, even at the present time, in the register[3] of your holy congregation. Let me also

[1] One of the name of Gudfrid, probably the same individual, afterwards became abbot of Lindisfarne. See Eccl. Hist. § 359.

[2] "Gudfrido mansionario." The Bollandists explain this term by "Ecclesiæ prefectus aut custos."

[3] An allusion to the custom which prevailed in monastic establishments, by which the names of benefactors were recorded in a book, which was called the "Liber Vitæ." The register of the benefactors of Lindisfarne (afterwards removed to Durham) is yet extant, (MS. Cott. Domit. vii.) and was printed by the Surtees Society, 8vo. Lond. 1841. These benefactors were prayed for in the canon of the mass. See Martene, De Antiq. Eccl. Ritibus, i. 145, ed. 1788.

inform you, my holy brother, that in the same order which I now present to you, I have lately, at the request of some of our brethren, composed (though somewhat more briefly) in verses of heroic measure the life of our same God-beloved father. If it please you, you can procure a copy of this work from me, where you will perceive in the preface that I promised to write a more full account of his life and miracles; a promise which I now hasten to fulfil, in the present little work, as far as the Lord vouchsafes to grant to me ability thereto.

Praying, therefore, for you, my most beloved brethren and masters, may the Almighty Lord vouchsafe to keep you safe, in your present blessed state. Amen.

## LIFE, MIRACLES, &c.

### Chap. I.[1]—How Cudberct the servant of God was warned by a Child that he should hereafter become a Bishop.

§ 3. In beginning the account of the life of the blessed Cudberct, we would hallow its commencement by quoting the words of the prophet Jeremiah, who in lauding the state of the anchorite's perfection, says: "It is good for a man when he hath borne the yoke from his youth; he shall sit alone, and keep silent, because he shall raise himself above himself." [Lam. iii. 27.] In like manner, Cudberct the man of God, who bowed his neck from early youth to the monastic yoke, was so inflamed with the sweetness of this goodly state, that when occasion offered, he eagerly grasped at the life and conversation of an anchorite, and rejoiced for no small time "to sit alone and to keep silence" from all human intercourse, in the sweetness of divine contemplation. Thus heavenly grace, that it might increase the more as he advanced in years, urged him on by little and little in the way of truth, even from the first years of his boyhood; albeit until his eighth year, which is the first of boyhood after infancy, he was wont to give his mind entirely to the sports and wantonness of children, so that he might be said to be a living testimony of what is recorded of the blessed Samuel: "Now *Cudberct* did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed to him." [1 Sam. iii. 7.] Increase of praise, then, be to him who in his more advanced age was perfectly to "know the Lord," and to hear with the opened ear of the heart, the Word of the Lord. But at this time, as we have said, Cudberct took great pleasure in jests and childish sports, and, as was in keeping with his age, he loved to be in the company of other boys, and greatly desired to associate himself with them in all their games; and as he was

[1] Compare Vit. Metr. i.; Vit. Anon. § 4.

active by nature and possessed a ready wit, he was wont to be the champion in all such sports; so that sometimes when the rest were tired out, he yet unwearied would demand, as a joyous victor, if there were any that would yet contend with him. For whether they practised leaping or running or wrestling, or any other sport which required agility of limb, he boasted that he could surpass all his equals in age, and sometimes even his elders. For when he was a child he knew as a child, he thought as a child; but when he became a man, he put away childish things. [1 Cor. xiii. 11.]

§ 4. Divine providence, howbeit, by a meet instructor, early vouchsafed to restrain the buoyancy of this childish spirit. Bishop Trumuine [1] of blessed memory affirmed that Cudberct had himself told him how this happened. "One day," he said, "a considerable number of boys, of whom he was one, were engaged as usual in wrestling in a meadow; and as many of them, with the usual thoughtlessness of boyhood, were twisting their limbs into various unnatural postures, suddenly one of these little ones, of about the age of three years, as it would appear, ran up to Cudberct, and, as if with the gravity of old age, began to exhort him not to indulge in these idle sports, but rather to subject his mind as well as his limbs to a grave deportment. Cudberct having paid no attention to this admonition, the little fellow threw himself on the ground, and with tears running down his cheeks, exhibited signs of great grief. Some ran to console him, but he still continued to weep. Whereupon they asked him what unexpected event had happened to cause such lamentations. And as Cudberct also was comforting him, he at length exclaimed: "Why will you behave thus, so contrary both to nature and to your own rank, O Cudberct, most holy prelate and priest? It becomes not you to sport among children; you whom the Lord has consecrated to be a teacher of virtue to your elders!" When Cudberct, who possessed a good disposition, heard these words, he received them with fixed attention, and soothing the sorrowing child with affectionate kindness, he resolved forthwith to forsake these vain sports; and returning home, he began to be more grave in his deportment from that time forth and more manly in disposition: the Holy Ghost Himself assuredly teaching him in his inmost heart, that which had already sounded outwardly to his ears by the mouth of a babe. And let no one marvel, that the wantonness of a boy should by the Lord's doing be restrained through the agency of a child, since it pleased Him once to check the madness of the prophet by putting words into the mouth of a dumb beast. [2 Pet. ii. 16.] For in His praise it has been truly said: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." [Psal. viii. 2.]

[1] Trumwine was bishop of the Picts, (Eccl. Hist. iv. 12, § 288,) was one of those persons who induced Cuthbert to accept the bishopric of Lindisfarne, (iv. 28, § 347,) and upon the death of Ecgfrith, king of Northumbria, in A.D. 684, was driven from his diocese and compelled to take refuge in the monastery of Whitby (iv. 26, § 341). An outline of his life may be seen in the Acta SS. mens. Feb. ii. 414.

CHAP. II.[1]—HOW HE WAS CRIPPLED, THROUGH A PAINFUL SWELLING IN HIS KNEE, WHICH WAS CURED BY AN ANGEL.

§ 5. AND as it is written that "to him that hath, more shall be given, and he shall abound," that is, to him that hath a firm purpose and love for virtue, abundance thereof by heavenly bounty shall be given; so from the time that Cudberct, the servant of the Lord, retained in an earnest heart the lesson he had heard from the exhortation of a fellow-creature, so in like manner he obtained comfort from the vision and voice of an angel. He was on one occasion struck with a sudden pain in his knee, which began to swell with an acrid tumour, so that the nerves of his knee being contracted, he was obliged to keep it suspended from touching the ground, and so to limp from place to place, till the disease increased so much that he was no longer able to walk. One day, as he had been carried out of doors by his attendants and was reclining in the open air, he suddenly saw coming in the distance an horseman of honourable mien, and clothed in white garments; and moreover the horse on which he rode was of incomparable beauty. On approaching, the rider courteously saluted Cudberct, and asked him, as it were pleasantly, if he would do a service for such a guest as he was. Whereupon Cudberct replied, "I would most readily stand up to do you every service, were I not, for the punishment of my faults, rendered incapable of so doing, and bound as a prisoner by this disease. For I now of a long time have been oppressed with this swollen knee, nor can the skill of any physician heal me." Whereupon the stranger leaping from his horse, and carefully examining his diseased knee; "Seethe," says he, "some wheaten flour in milk, and anoint the tumour with this poultice, while it is warm, and you shall be healed," and saying this he mounted his horse and departed. Cudberct obeying this command, was healed in a few days, and he acknowledged that it was an angel who had given him this advice, sent namely by Him who formerly vouchsafed to send the archangel Raphael to restore sight to Tobias. [Tob. v. and vi.] And if it should seem incredible to any one, that an angel should appear on horseback, let him read the history of the Maccabees, in which it is related that angels came on horseback to the defence of Judas Maccabeus and the temple of God. [2 Mac. iii. 25; v. 2; x. 29.]

CHAP. III.[2]—HOW THE WIND WAS CHANGED BY HIS PRAYER, AND HOW THE SHIPS WHICH HAD BEEN DRIVEN OUT TO SEA, WERE BROUGHT BACK TO THE SHORE.

§ 6. FROM this time forth, this devout servant of the Lord, as he himself was wont to attest afterwards to his friends, by devoutly praying to the Lord, when he was in difficulties, was often delivered from them by the ministry of angels; yea, even when with merciful kindness he prayed for others that happened to be in danger, his

[1] Vit. Metr. cap. ii.; Vit. Anon. § 7.

[2] Vit. Metr. cap. iii. This incident is omitted in the anonymous legend; Beda derived it, as he tells us, from the information of one of the brethren of the monastery of Tynemouth.

prayers were heard by Him who is ever wont to give ear to the "poor that calleth on Him, and to deliver him out of all his troubles." Now there is a monastery not far from the mouth of the river Tyne,[1] towards the south. This was, at the time we speak of, a community of men, but now it is changed, as the state of all temporal affairs change, into one of virgins who serve Christ, and now flourish in goodly number. Those servants of Christ, then, were conveying upon the river, from a distant part, a supply of wood for the use of the monastery, on rafts. And when they had now arrived opposite the monastery, with their burden, and were endeavouring to draw them to the shore, behold, on a sudden a tempestuous wind arose from the west, and catching the rafts began to drift them out of the mouth of the river. The monks, perceiving this from the monastery, launched some boats on the river, with the view of assisting those that were toiling on board the rafts; but being overpowered by the force of the current and the violence of the winds, their efforts were unavailing. Despairing then of human aid, they fled to that which is divine. They accordingly went out of the monastery, (while the rafts were drifting into the ocean,) and assembling on the nearest point they bent their knees, beseeching the Lord for those whom they beheld hurried out at that very moment into so great a peril of death. But the earnest prayers of the brethren were long deferred for this end, namely, that divine providence might manifest how greatly the power of prayer existed in Cudberct. For there was assembled on the opposite bank of the river, among whom he himself also stood, no small number of the common people. And as the monks looked on with sadness, and saw the vessels driven out to sea, till they appeared as if they were five little birds (for there were five rafts) floating on the waves, the populace began to jeer at the life and conversation of the monks, as if those who despised the common laws of mortals, and who had introduced a new and unknown rule of life, deserved to suffer such a calamity. Cudberct, however, checked the reproaches of the scoffers, exclaiming, "What are you doing, brethren, in speaking evil against those whom you see hurried away towards death? Would it not be better and more like men, were you to pray to the Lord for their safety, than thus to rejoice at their perils?" But chafing against him, with mind and tongue equally churlish, they called out, "Let no one pray for them; may God have pity on none of those persons who have taken away our old worship,[2] and no one knows how to observe the new!" On receiving this answer, Cudberct bent his knees in prayer to the Lord, and bowed his head to the ground; and forthwith the violence of the winds being turned round brought the rafts back in safety to the beach, together with those who guided them, greatly rejoicing, and laid them on shore in a fitting position, close

[1] The Bollandists, Mabillon and Smith, agree in supposing that this is the small stream in Lothian, upon which was situated the monastery of Tiningham. It appears more probable, however, that we are here to understand the river which separates the county of Durham from that of Northumberland. See § 55.

[2] Here we see how long the old heathendom lingered in Northumbria, and how embittered were the feelings of the populace against those who opposed it.

to the monastery. On seeing this the rustics forthwith blushed for their misbelief, and proclaimed the faith of the venerable Cudberct with the praise due to him. Nor from that time did they cease to proclaim it; as a certain most approved monk of our monastery, from whose narration I received this history, told me, saying that he had heard it in the presence of many others, from one of themselves, a man of rustic simplicity, who was wholly incapable of inventing a fiction.

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CHAP. IV.[1] [A.D. 651.]—HOW AS HE WAS KEEPING COMPANY WITH SHEPHERDS HE SAW THE SOUL OF ST. AIDAN, THE BISHOP, CARRIED UP TO HEAVEN BY ANGELS.

§ 7. BUT when it pleased the grace of Christ, which ruleth the life of the faithful, that the virtue of his servant should undergo a stricter discipline, thereby to earn the glory of a higher reward, it happened that he was keeping watch over the flocks committed to his charge on some[2] remote mountains. For when on a certain night he was extending his long vigils in prayer, as was his wont, his companions being asleep, he saw on a sudden a light streaming down from heaven, breaking the mid-darkness of the long night. And in this were choirs of the heavenly host coming down to earth; and they forthwith, after taking away a soul of exceeding brightness, returned to their heavenly country. The young man, beloved of God, was exceedingly touched at this vision, and resolved to use his utmost endeavour to attain to such grace, and to the fellowship hereafter of beings so glorious, in everlasting life and happiness. He accordingly gave instant praise and thanksgiving to God, and with brotherly exhortation arousing his companions to praise the Lord, "Alas! woe unto us," he said, "who by our sleep and drowsiness are not permitted to behold the light of the ever-watchful servants of Christ. For lo! while I was watching unto prayer for a little while this night, I have seen the wonderful works of God. I have seen the gate of heaven opened, and the spirit of some saint introduced thither by an angelic company, who is now, while still we lie in lowest darkness, for ever blessed in beholding the glory of the heavenly mansion, and Christ its king. And verily, I think that he whom I saw carried away in the splendour of such light, amid the choirs of so many angels, leading him to heaven, must either have been some holy bishop or some excellent man of the number of the faithful." Saying thus, Cudberct, the man of God, kindled not a little the hearts of the shepherds to worship and praise God. And it was found when morning[3] came, that Aidan, the bishop of the church of

[1] Vit. Metr. cap. iv.; Vit. Anon. § 8.

[2] Beda does not state where these hills were situated; but we have the authority of the Anonymous Life, § 8, for stating that they were near the river Leder, in Scotland, which empties itself into the Tweed.

[3] The authority of the Anonymous Life here seems preferable, which tells us that the intelligence of the death of Aidan did not reach Cuthbert until after a few days.

Lindisfarne, a man of especially great virtue, had departed to the Lord at the very time Cudberct had seen him carried up to heaven; and[1] forthwith giving up to their masters the flocks which he was keeping he resolved to enter a monastery.

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CHAP. V.[2] [A.D. 651.]—HOW THE LORD SUPPLIED HIM WITH FOOD WHEN HE WAS ON A JOURNEY.

§ 8. And while, with a mind now thoroughly in earnest, he was meditating on his new entrance into a more rigorous state of life, heavenly grace was present with him to strengthen his mind to a more strict purpose, and instructed him by manifest tokens that those who seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, shall over and above find, by the bounty of his promise, even those things which appertain to the nourishment of the body. Thus one day, as he was journeying[3] alone, he turned aside at the third hour into a farm-stead, which he perchance perceived at some distance. Here he entered the house of a devout matron, with the view of resting himself for a little while, caring more for procuring food for his horse on which he rode than for himself; for it was at the beginning of winter.[4] The woman of the house welcomed him kindly, and earnestly besought him to allow her to prepare dinner, that he might refresh himself. The man of God however refused, saying, "I must not eat as yet, for this is the day of the fast." Now, it was the sixth day of the week, on which day[5] most of the faithful are wont to prolong their fast even to the ninth hour,[6] out of reverence to our Lord's passion. The woman, however, urgent in her zeal for hospitality, persisted in pressing him: "Consider," she said, "that on your journey you will find no village nor habitation of man; for indeed a long journey is before you, nor can you possibly accomplish it before sunset. Wherefore I beg of you to take some food before setting out, lest you should be obliged to fast all day, or perhaps even till to-morrow." But notwithstanding the woman's importunity, Cudberct's love of religion overcame her entreaties, and he spent the rest of the day fasting until the evening.

§ 9. And when he perceived, as evening was now at hand, that he could not accomplish his intended journey on this the same day, and that there was no human habitation near, where he could take shelter for the night, lo! as he went on he suddenly noticed some

[1] If this expression is to be understood literally, we hence gather that Cuthbert embraced monachism in A.D. 651.

[2] Vit. Metr. cap. vi.; Vit. Anon. § 9.

[3] The route of his journey is more clearly marked by the anonymous legend, § 9.

[4] Aidan's death occurred in the month of August; the incident here recorded took place, as is here stated, about the beginning of the winter of the same year; shortly after which, towards the end of 651 or the beginning of 652, Cuthbert entered the monastery of Melrose.

[5] Considerable diversity of usage prevailed in different churches in regard to fasting upon this day, as we learn from the epistle of St. Augustine to Casulanus, (ep. lxxxvi. Opp. ii. 119, ed. fol. Ludg. 1664,) yet the custom of the western church generally was in favour of its adoption. See the Canons of Odo (A.D. 943), § 9, and the Laws of Cant. § 17.

[6] Namely, three o'clock, at which hour our Saviour expired on the Cross.

shepherds' huts [1] hard by, which having been roughly put together in summer, now lay ruinous and deserted. Entering one of these with the view of passing the night, he tied his horse to the wall and set before him a bundle of hay to eat, which the wind had carried off the roof. He himself meanwhile spent the time in prayer, when suddenly in the midst of the psalmody, he noticed his horse raising his head, and pulling at the thatching of the hut, and as he drew it down there fell also, along with the straw covering of the roof, a folded napkin. When he had finished his prayer, wishing to ascertain what it was, he went and found wrapped up in the napkin the half of a loaf and a piece of meat yet warm, sufficient for himself for a single meal. And uttering praise for this heavenly bounty, "I give thanks," he said, "to God, who hath vouchsafed to provide a meal for me, who am fasting for his love, as well as for my companion, the horse." He divided therefore the piece of bread which he had found, and gave one-half of it to his horse, reserving the rest for his own refreshment. From that day forward he became more ready to fast, since he assuredly understood that a table had been spread for him in the wilderness, by his gift, who fed of old Elias the solitary, who in like manner having no one to minister to him, was fed by means of ravens for no small time; for "Behold, the eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear him: upon them that trust in his mercy; to deliver their soul from death: and to keep them alive in famine." [Ps. xxxiii. 18, 19.] I heard the above from a devout priest of our monastery, which is at the mouth of the river Wear, by name Inguald, who now in the grace of good old age looks forward with a clean heart to heavenly things rather than to earthly things; and he said moreover, that he had heard this from Cudberct himself after he was a bishop.

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CHAP. VI.[2] [A.D. 651.]—WHAT BOISIL, A HOLY MAN, PROPHESIED IN SPIRIT CONCERNING HIM, BEARING TESTIMONY TO CUDBERCT, WHEN HE CAME TO HIS MONASTERY.

§ 10. MEANWHILE this venerable servant of the Lord, having forsaken all earthly concerns, hastened to put himself under monastic discipline; for he deemed that he had been summoned by the heavenly vision to seek the joys of everlasting blessedness, and invited by the food supplied to him from heaven, to suffer temporal hunger and thirst for the Lord. Now, although he knew that the church of Lindisfarne possessed many holy men, by whose learning

[1] Some of those temporary habitations yet to be seen among the wilder Northumbrian hills called "sheals," or "shealings," which arrested the notice of Camden when he visited this portion of the country. "All over the Wastes, as they call them, as well as in Gilsland, you would think you see the ancient Nomades; a martial sort of people that from April to August lie in little huts, which they call sheals or shealings, here and there among their several flocks."—Brit. col. 1079.

[2] Beda has here considerably amplified the corresponding passage of the anonymous legend, which is deficient in incident. His own metrical narrative is entirely silent. It would appear, therefore, that when it was written he had not obtained the information which Sigfrid afterwards supplied upon this portion of Cuthbert's early history.

and examples he might be well instructed, yet, allured by the fame of the exalted virtues of Boisil, a monk and priest, he chose rather to go to Mailros.[1] And it happened when he arrived there, as he leaped from his horse and was about to enter the church to pray, that he gave his horse to an attendant, as well as the spear[2] which he held in his hand, (for he had not as yet laid aside his secular dress,) Boisil himself, who was standing at the gate of the monastery, first saw him. And foreseeing in spirit how great should be the future conversation of him whom he beheld, he made this single remark to those who stood at hand, "Behold a servant of God!" imitating Him who said of Nathaniel, when coming toward Him, "Behold," he said, "an Israelite, in whom there is no guile." [John i. 47.] Sigfrid, a devout priest, and a long-tried servant of the Lord, used to attest the truth of this, for he was standing by, along with others, when Boisil made the remark. He was at that time a youth in the same monastery, and learning the first rudiments of a monastic life, which now as the perfect man in Christ he fulfils in our monastery, that is the monastery of Jarrow, and who amid the failing sighs of waning breath, thirsts after a joyful entrance into another life.[3] And Boisil, saying no more, kindly received Cudberct as he arrived, and on his explaining the object of his visit, namely, that he preferred a monastery to the world, he kindly kept him near himself; for he was the provost of that same monastery.

§ 11. And after a few days, on the arrival of Eata of blessed memory, (then a priest and the abbot of that monastery of Melrose, and afterwards abbot of Lindisfarne, and likewise bishop of the church of Lindisfarne,) Boisil spoke to him of Cudberct; and telling him how well-disposed he was, obtained permission to give him the tonsure, and to unite him in fellowship with the rest of the brethren. Having[4] entered the monastery, Cudberct immediately strove to observe the regular life with equal fervour as the rest; yea rather he was more diligent than all, in reading, working,[5] watching and prayer. Moreover, like Samson, who was a Nazarite, and the strongest of men, he carefully abstained from everything that could intoxicate; but he was not able to practise so great abstinence from food, lest he should become unfitted for his necessary work. Now he was robust in body and of unbroken strength, and was capable of any kind of labour to which he chose to apply himself.

[1] A monastery situated at no great distance from the later and better known foundation. Concerning these establishments the reader will find equal instruction and pleasure in consulting the Monastic Annals of Tweeddale, by the Rev. James Morton.

[2] The illuminations contained in Saxon manuscripts, such as Cædmon, show that a traveller generally carried a spear with him in his journies.

[3] A different individual, therefore, from the abbot of Wearmouth, who died A.D. 689; although Colgan considered them as identical.

[4] Simeon of Durham states (I. iii.) that this occurred A.D. 651.

[5] The Rule of St. Benedict (cap. 48) enjoined manual labour upon its followers; and a number of illustrations collected by Martene, De Antiq. Eccl. Ritibus, iv. 23, prove how generally such commands were obeyed.

CHAP. VII.[1] [A. D. 661.]—HOW HE ENTERTAINED AN ANGEL AS HIS GUEST; AND WHILST HE SOUGHT TO MINISTER EARTHLY BREAD, HOW HE WAS PERMITTED TO RECEIVE FROM THE SAME THAT WHICH WAS HEAVENLY.

§ 12. AND when some years after it pleased king Alchfrid,[2] for the redemption of his soul, to give to the abbot Eata a certain domain in his kingdom called "In-hrypum" [Ripon], there to construct a monastery, the same abbot taking some of the brethren along with him, amongst whom Cudberct was one, he founded the required monastery, and in it instituted the same monastic discipline which he had previously established at Melrose. Here Cudberct, the servant of the Lord, was appointed to the office of guest-master,[3] when, for the sake of proving his devotion, it is said that he entertained an angel of the Lord. For on going out early in the morning from the inner buildings of the monastery to the guest-chamber, he found a young man sitting there, and supposing that he was a mortal, he immediately welcomed him with the customary forms of kindness. He gave him water to wash his hands, he himself bathed his feet, he wiped them with a napkin, and he placed them in his bosom, humbly chafing them with his hands; and he asked him to remain until the third hour of the day, that he might then be refreshed with food, lest if he should go on his journey without support, he should suffer alike from hunger and the winter's cold. For he thought that the stranger had been wearied with a night journey, as well as by the snowy blasts, and that he had turned aside there at dawn for the sake of resting. The other answered that he could not do so, and said that he must speedily depart; for the abode to which he was hastening was very far distant. But Cudberct persevered in his entreaties, and at last adjuring him in the divine name, he obliged him to stay. And immediately after the prayers of the hour of tierce were concluded, and meal-time was at hand, he laid the table and offered him food, saying, "I beseech thee, brother, refresh thyself until I return from having brought some new bread, for I expect it is ready baked by this time." But when he returned he found not the guest whom he had left at table, and looking out for the print of his feet, he saw none whatever, although a recent fall of snow had covered the ground, and would very readily have betrayed the steps of the traveller and pointed out the direction which he had taken. The man of God, therefore, greatly amazed and wondering inwardly at the circumstance, replaced the table in the inner apartment. On entering this he forthwith perceived the fragrance of a marvellous sweet savour; and on looking round to see whence so sweet an odour arose, he saw lying beside him three loaves yet warm, of unwonted whiteness and beauty. And trembling he said within himself, "I perceive that it is an angel of God whom I have received, who has come to feed, and not to be fed. Lo! he has

[1] Vit Metr. cap. vii.; Vit. Anon. § 12.

[2] Compare Eccl. Hist. § 227, where the same donation is mentioned.

[3] "Suscipiendorum Prepositus Hospitum." Orig. This was an office of trust and dignity, and was usually conferred on a person of good address and manners.

brought such loaves as this earth cannot produce ; for they surpass lilies in whiteness, roses in smell, and honey in flavour. Hence it is clear, that they have not sprung from this heavy earth of ours, but have been brought from the paradise of Eden. And no marvel that he who enjoys the eternal bread of life in heaven should refuse to partake of earthly food." Wherefore the man of God being moved to compunction, from having been witness to so mighty a miracle, was more zealous from that time forth in the works of virtue ; till with increasing good deeds heavenly grace also increased. And from that time he very often was allowed to see and converse with angels, and when an-hungered, he was refreshed with food specially prepared for him by the Lord. Now as Cudberct was affable and possessed pleasant manners, he was wont frequently to relate the deeds of the fathers that preceded him, to those that were with him, as an example for their imitation. And he was also wont humbly to interweave something concerning those spiritual gifts which the bounty of heaven had bestowed upon himself. This he sometimes did openly, but he generally took care to do it under a veil, as if it had occurred to some other person. Nevertheless, those that heard him understood that he spoke of himself, according to the example of the great doctor of the Gentiles, who sometimes made an open display of his own gifts, and at other times spoke under the guise of another person, as when he says, " I knew a man in Christ, more than fourteen years ago, such an one caught up even to the third heaven." [2 Cor. xii. 2.]

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Chap. VIII. [A.D. 661.]—How Cuthbert was saved from an Illness, and how Boisil when dying foretold what was to happen to him.

§ 13. Meanwhile, since the whole condition of this world is fragile and unsteady as the sea when a sudden tempest arises, the abovenamed abbot Eata, with Cudberct, and the rest of the brethren whom he had brought along with him, were driven home, and the site of the monastery which he had founded was given for a habitation to other monks.[1] But Cudberct, this memorable soldier of Christ, changed not his mind with the change of locality, nor swerved from the resolution he had once taken of heavenly warfare: but with as much diligence as he had been wont to use, he gave ear and attention both to the words and example of the blessed Boisil. At this time, as Herefrid, his familiar friend and priest, (who was formerly abbot of the monastery of Lindisfarne,) attests. Cudberct (as he was accustomed to relate) was seized by a pestilential disease,[2] of which many at that time died, throughout the whole length and breadth of Britain. But the brethren of that monastery spent all the night watching and praying for his life and

[1] Alchfrid, king of that portion of Northumbria in which Ripon was situated, having adopted the Roman calculation of Easter upon the persuasion of Wilfrid, expelled from Ripon the Scottish monks who adhered to the rival theory. This was in A.D. 661. See Eccl. Hist. § 416.

[2] Concerning this pestilence, see the Eccl. Hist. iii. 27, § 240.

recovery, for all reckoned that his stay with them in the flesh was still necessary for them, seeing he was so holy a man. And when some of the monks told him of this next morning,—for they had done this without his knowledge,—he forthwith answered and said, "And why then do I lie here? It is not to be supposed that God will despise the prayers of so many of his devout servants. Give me my staff and hose." And immediately rising up, he began to endeavour to walk, leaning on his staff, and his strength increasing every day, he was restored to sound health; but though the tumour which appeared on his thigh ceased to swell, and gradually sinking beneath the surface of the flesh, settled in his bowels, he ceased not to feel a little pain in the inward parts for almost all the rest of his life, so that, like the apostle, "his strength was made perfect in weakness." [2 Cor. xii. 9.]

§ 14. Now when Boisil, the servant of the Lord, saw Cudberct once more restored to health, he said, "You see, brother, that you are now freed from the trouble under which you laboured, and I say to you, that you are not to be any farther afflicted at present, nor shall you die at this time; and at the same time I counsel you, since approaching death is waiting for me, not to omit to learn something from me, as long as I am able to teach you. For I have not more than seven days remaining, in which I shall have soundness of body, and strength of tongue to teach. Without doubting the truth of his [master's] words, Cudberct replied: "And what, I pray, is best for me to read, which I can accomplish in one week?" And he said: "John the Evangelist. Now, I have a copy,[1] divided into seven gatherings,[2] one of which, with the Lord's help, we may read each day, and, as far as we require, confer together upon it." It was done as they had agreed. This reading they speedily accomplished, because they treated not of deep questions, but only of the simplicity of faith, which worketh by love. The reading, therefore, having been completed in seven days, Boisil, the man of God, having been attacked by the before-mentioned disease, came to his last end, and having passed over this, with great exultation he entered into the joys of everlasting light. It is said, that during these seven days he revealed to Cudberct all that was to happen to him; for, as I said before, he was a man of exceeding holiness, and endowed with the gift of prophecy. He foretold also that the virulence of the pestilence which was then raging should continue for three years,[3] before it should come to abbot Eata his son, nor did he conceal that he should be taken away by it; but he added that his abbot should not die of it, but

[1] Simeon of Durham, (I. iii.) relates that a manuscript, apparently this present volume, was in his day preserved at Durham, and was then remarkable for its freshness and wonderful beauty. There is a striking similarity between the manner in which Boisil spent the last days of his life, and what we know of Beda's occupations under similar circumstances. See the letter of Cuthbert, Beda's disciple, in which he gives an account of the illness and death of his master.

[2] "Quaterniones septem;" seven foldings or gatherings of parchment, similar to one of our folded sheets in a printed book.

[3] That is, from 661 to 664.

rather of the disease which physicians called dysentery, and this he truly said, as the event proved. He also informed Cudberct, among other things, that he should be made bishop. Cudberct, however, when afterwards he had withdrawn himself from the world as an anchorite, would not say to any one that Boisil had foretold that he should become a bishop; but he was wont to protest with much sorrow, to the monks who occasionally visited him, "that were it possible that I could hide myself in ever so narrow a cell, upon a cliff where the waves of the swelling ocean should gird me round on every side, and shut me out from the sight as well as the knowledge of all men, not even there should I think myself free from the snares of this deceitful world; but there also I would dread lest covetousness should tempt me to leave my retreat, or suggest some cause or other to lure me away."

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CHAP. IX.[1] [A.D. 661.]—HOW EARNEST CUDBERCT WAS IN THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD.

§ 15. AFTER the death of Boisil, the priest beloved by God, Cudberct entered on the office of provost, as we mentioned above, and performed its functions for several years, with so much spiritual zeal, (as became a saint,) that he gave to the whole community not only the counsels but also an example of monastic life. He was also zealous in converting the surrounding populace, far and wide, from their former foolish life, and leading them to the love of heavenly joys. For many profaned by wicked deeds the faith which they professed; and some in the time of mortality even abandoned the sacrament of faith with which they had been imbued, flocked to the erroneous medicaments of idolatry, and endeavoured by means of incantations and amulets,[2] or some other mysteries of demoniacal art, to arrest the progress of the plague which had been sent by God their Maker. Wherefore to correct both these errors, Cudberct frequently went out from the monastery, sometimes on horseback, but more generally on foot, and preached the way of truth to those who were in error, as Boisil had been wont also to do in his time, in the neighbouring villages. Now it was the custom in those days with the English people, when a clerk or priest came into a village, that all at his command flocked to hear the Word, willingly hearkened to what was said, and more willingly still followed up by works what they heard or understood. So great moreover was Cudberct's skill in teaching, so vast was his power of loving persuasion, so striking was the light of his angelic countenance, that no one in his presence dared to conceal from him the hidden secrets of his heart, but all declared openly in confes-

[1] See Eccl. Hist. iv. 27, § 344.

[2] "Alligaturas," *i.e.* amulets bound round parts of the body. See Du Cange, under the word *Ligatura*. In the corresponding passage in his History, § 344, he uses "phylacteries" as an equivalent. The recent converts to Christianity frequently relapsed to their former heathen practices under the pressure of disease. See Hist. Eccl. § 250.

sion what each had done amiss, thinking in truth that none of his misdeeds were concealed from him; and each strove to wipe away the sins he had confessed, as he commanded, with fruits worthy of repentance. He was also wont to seek out and preach in those remote villages, which were situated far from the world in wild mountain places and fearful to behold, which as well by their poverty and distance up the country prevented intercourse between them and such as could instruct their inhabitants. Abandoning himself willingly to this pious work, Cudberct cultivated these remote districts and people with so much zeal and learning, that he often did not return to his monastery for an entire week, sometimes for two or three, yea occasionally for even a full month; remaining all the time in the mountains, and calling back to heavenly concerns these rustic people, by the word of his preaching as well as by his example of virtue.

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CHAP. X.[1] [A.D. 661.]—HOW, AFTER SPENDING THE NIGHT IN THE SEA IN PRAYER, SOME ANIMALS WHICH FREQUENT THE SAME OFFERED HIM SERVICE ON HIS COMING OUT; AND HOW A BROTHER WHO WITNESSED THIS FELL SICK THROUGH FEAR, AND WAS RESTORED TO HEALTH BY HIS PRAYERS.

§ 16. Now as this holy man was increasing in virtues and signs, in the same monastery,[2] and the fame of his works was spreading on all sides, it happened that a holy nun and mother-superior of Christ's handmaidens, by name Aebbe, was ruling a convent situated at a place called Coldingham[3] [Coludi Urbem]. This abbess was as honourable in religion as she was noble in birth, in the estimation of all, for she was uterine sister of king Osuiu. And she sent to this man of God, begging him to come, and to edify both herself and the inmates of her monastery. Cudberct could not refuse what the charity of God's handmaid so earnestly requested. He accordingly went thither, and tarrying for some days, he expounded to all the way of justice, which he not only preached, but which in like manner he practised.

§ 17. Now while the rest of the community were asleep at night, it was his usual habit to go out alone and spend the greater part of the night in prayer and prolonged vigils; nor did he return home till the hour of common prayer was at hand. One night, one of the brethren of the same monastery, seeing him go out in silence, stealthily followed him with the design of discovering where he was going, or what was his object in doing so. Cudberct accordingly went out, and followed by the spy he proceeded to the sea, on the borders of which the monastery was placed on a height; and entering into the depths of the water, till the swelling waves reached to his arms and neck, he spent the darkness of the wakeful night in praises, which were accompanied with the sound of the

[1] Vit. Metr. cap. viii.; Vit. Anon. § 13.

[2] Namely, that of Melrose, of which he was still an inmate.

[3] Situated in Berwickshire; see Eccl. Hist. iv. 19, § 310. It afterwards became a cell to the great Benedictine monastery of Durham.

waves. And when dawn was drawing near he came up to land, and concluded his prayer on the shore on bended knees. And as he was doing this there came forth two beasts, vulgarly called otters,[1] from the depth of the sea, which stretched on the sand, began to warm his feet with their breath, and busily to wipe them dry with their hair. As soon as this service was completed, Cudberct gave them his blessing, and dismissed them to their native waters, while he himself returned to the house to recite the canonical hymns with the brethren at the appointed hour.[2] Meantime, the monk, who had been watching him from his hiding-place, was struck with so much fear that he could with great difficulty reach home with tottering steps. Early in the morning he came to Cudberct, and throwing himself prostrate before him, with tears besought pardon for the guilt of his foolish presumption, never doubting but that Cudberct knew what he had done during the night, and how much he had suffered. Whereupon he answered, "What is the matter, brother; what have you done? Have you attempted to spy out why I went out at night? Nevertheless, I forgive you the fault which you have committed; but only on this condition, however, that you promise not to reveal what you have seen to any one before my death." In which precept truly he followed the example of Him, who, when he had shown the glory of his majesty to his disciples on the Mount, said, "See ye tell this to no one, till the Son of man is risen from the dead." [Matt. xvii. 9.] Wherefore, when the monk promised what he demanded, Cudberct gave him his blessing, and in like manner wiped away the fault and disquiet of mind which he had so rashly incurred; and he keeping his promise, concealed in the silence of his heart the miracle to which he had been witness, as long as Cudberct lived, though he took care to publish it to many after his death.

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Chap. XI.[3] [A.D. 661.]—How when the Sailors were prevented from re-embarking by a Tempest, he foretold that the sea should be serene on a certain day; and meantime obtained for them a supply of food by his prayers.

§ 18. Meanwhile the man of God began also to advance in the spirit of prophecy, to foretel things to come, and to relate distant events as if present. Now, on one occasion, as he quitted his monastery[4] on some affairs which required his presence, embarking on board a vessel for that part of the land of the Picts which is called Niduari,[5] he was accompanied by two of the brethren; one of whom, subsequently promoted to the rank of the priesthood, made known to many a mighty miracle, which was

[1] In the original, "lutræ," otters; but from the incidents mentioned, doubtless seals are intended to be introduced.
[2] Mattins, or lauds, celebrated at the dawn of day.
[3] Vit. Anon § 15; Vit. Metr. cap. ix.
[4] He was still an inmate of the monastery of Melrose.
[5] See the anonymous legend, § 15.

wrought there by this man of the Lord. Now they had arrived there after the day of our Lord's nativity, with the expectation of a very speedy return, because the aspect of the waves was smiling, and the winds were favourable; and from these circumstances they took no provisions with them. But it happened far otherwise than they had expected. For scarcely had they reached the land, when a wild tempest arose, which totally prevented them from commencing their voyage homewards. For several days they languished amid the twofold perils of cold and hunger. Nevertheless, the man of God would not spend even such a time as this in sluggish idleness, nor give himself up to lazy sleep, but took care to persevere in prayer throughout the whole night. Now the most holy day of our Lord's apparition [the Epiphany] was at hand. Whereupon he spoke encouragingly to his companions, for he was always pleasant and affable:—"Why should we become torpid in so much sloth, and not seek by some means or another the way of salvation? Behold, the earth is shrouded with snow; the sky is rendered fearful with clouds; the wind blows furiously with hostile blasts, and the stormy sea rages; we faint through want; and there is no man who can refresh us. Let us knock at our Lord's gate with prayers, calling on Him, who of old opened a way through the Red Sea for his own people, and miraculously fed them in the wilderness; let us beseech Him to have pity upon us also in this our peril. I believe that if our faith fail not He will not leave us fasting on this day, which He himself hath vouchsafed to illustrate with so great and so many[1] marvels of his majesty; and, I pray you, let us go in search of the goodly fare which He may vouchsafe to bestow upon us, that we may rejoice in the keeping of this his festival." Saying this, he led them under the cliff, where he himself was wont to pray during the watches of the night. On their arrival they found three pieces of the flesh of a dolphin, as if cut by human ministry, and ready for cooking; and on bended knees they gave thanks to God. Then Cudberct said, "You see, most beloved brethren, how good the grace of God is to those that trust and hope in the Lord. Behold, He hath prepared food for his servants, and also by this threefold division He hath shown us how many days we must remain here. Take therefore the gifts which Christ hath sent us, and departing, let us refresh ourselves, and abide fearless; for most assuredly the serenity of the sky and of the sea shall return to us on the third day." As he foretold, the tempest continued with great violence for three days, and was followed at length on the fourth day by the promised tranquillity, which brought them back with a prosperous breeze to their own country.

[1] The Latin church celebrated upon this day the three appearances, or manifestations, by which our Lord showed forth his glory; namely, his adoration by the Magi, his baptism, and his first miracle at Cana of Galilee. See Martene, De Antiq. Eccl. Ritibus, iii. 42.

CHAP. XII.[1] [A.D. 661.]—HOW, DURING A JOURNEY, HE FORETOLD THAT HE SHOULD RECEIVE A SUPPLY OF FOOD ON THE WAY, BY THE MINISTRY OF AN EAGLE; AND HOW HE RECEIVED IT.

§ 19. On a certain day also, when he had gone out of the monastery, accompanied by a youth only, that he might preach to the people according to his custom, he began to feel fatigued with long walking; and as a considerable portion of their journey yet remained before they could reach the town whither they were going, he said to the lad, trying him, "Tell me, my companion, where do you propose to find refreshment to-day; have you any friend on the road, to partake of whose hospitality we may turn aside?" But he replied, "I have also been running this very same thing over in the silence of my own heart, because on setting out we neither brought any provisions for the day, nor do we know any one on our road to give us an hospitable reception, and no small part of the journey remains, which we cannot accomplish fasting without great inconvenience." To whom the man of God replied, "Learn, my son, to have faith and hope always in the Lord; for no one who faithfully serves God can ever perish with hunger." And looking upwards and seeing an eagle flying aloft, "Do you see," he said, "that eagle flying? Even by its ministry it is possible for the Lord to feed us this day." Conversing thus the two pursued their route by the side of a certain river, when, lo! they suddenly observed the eagle sitting on the bank, and the man of God said, "Do you perceive where our handmaid, of whom I spake, is sitting? Run, I pray you, and search, and bring hither quickly what fare soever the Lord may have sent us." And the lad, running as he was desired, brought back a fish of considerable size, which the bird had lately taken from the river. But the man of God said, "What have you done, my son? why have you not given our handmaid her share? Cut it quickly in two, and give her the portion which she deserves for her service to us." The lad did as he was commanded, and brought back the remainder; and when dinner-time was come, they turned aside to an adjoining village, and having given the piece of fish to be cooked, they refreshed themselves, as well as those in whose house they had taken shelter, with a most agreeable feast, while Cudberct preached the word of God and praised Him for his bounty; for "Blessed is the man whose hope is in the Lord, and who hath not looked to vanity and idle folly." [Psal. xl. 4.] And resuming his journey, he proceeded to the point at which he intended to teach others.

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CHAP. XIII.[2] [A.D. 661.]—HOW, WHEN PREACHING TO THE PEOPLE, HE FORESAW THAT A PHANTOM-FIRE SHOULD SUDDENLY APPEAR, AND HOW HE EXTINGUISHED IT WHEN IT DID APPEAR.

§ 20. And at the same time, as he was preaching the Word of life to a number of persons who were assembled in a certain village, he suddenly foresaw in spirit that the old enemy was

[1] Vit. Metr. cap. x.; Vit. Anon. § 17, in the latter of which the circumstances are recounted with greater precision.

[2] Vit. Metr. cap. xi.; Vit. Anon. § 19.

present among them to hinder the work of salvation. Whereupon Cudberct determined to prevent his snares, by openly discovering beforehand what he understood was about to come. For as he was in the midst of his discourse, he suddenly stopped, and breaking out into an admonition, exclaimed :—"It is important, most beloved brethren, that as often as the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven are preached to you, you should hearken unto them with an attentive heart, and with an ever vigilant ear : lest haply the devil, who is master of a thousand injurious arts, should entangle you with superfluous cares, and lure you from listening to eternal salvation ;" and saying this, he resumed the thread of his discourse where he had interrupted it. And immediately that most wicked enemy, producing a phantom-fire, [seemed to] set fire to the house adjoining, so that the sparks of fire appeared to fly through the whole village, and, fanned by the wind, their sound filled the air.

Nearly all those who were assembled for instruction, with the exception of a few whom he kept back with outstretched hand, leaping up, rushed out to fetch water to quench the fire, but, nevertheless, no water could extinguish these false flames, until, by the prayers of Cudberct, that man of God, the author of these fallacies was put to flight, and vanished, together with the seeming fire, into empty air. On seeing this, the wondering crowd were wholesomely put to shame, and returning to the man of God, besought pardon on bended knees for their inconstant minds, confessing that they now understood that the devil never was for one moment slack in his endeavour to hinder the salvation of man. But he, confirming the weak, and strengthening the inconstant, resumed the counsels of life, which he had been giving when he was so interrupted.

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CHAP. XIV.[1] [A.D. 661.]—HOW BY PRAYER HE EXTINGUISHED THE FLAMES OF A HOUSE, WHICH WAS REALLY ON FIRE.

§ 21. AND not only did he quench phantom-fires, but he also extinguished by fervent rivulets of tears real fire, which many were unable to quench with water cold from the fountain. For as he was engaged, like the apostles of old, in dispensing the universal grace of wholesome instruction throughout the whole country, he came one day to the house of a certain devout woman, whom he took care frequently to visit, because he knew that she was very zealous in the performance of good works ; and as she had been his nurse from the first years of his boyhood, he was wont to call her his mother. Now she had a house in the western part of the small town into which the man of God had come to sow the Word, when suddenly, on the east side of the street, a house, which had been set on fire through carelessness, began to burn with great vehemence. A violent wind also, springing up from the same direction, carried away burning portions of the thatch, and tossed

[1] Vit. Metr. cap. xii.; Vit. Anon. § 20, in the latter of which some interesting particulars are recorded.

them far and wide about the whole town. Meanwhile, the flames becoming more violent, drove away those that were carrying water to extinguish the fire, and obliged them to retire to a distance. Seeing the threatened danger, the devout woman instantly hurried to the house into which she had received the man of God, and besought him to help them by his prayers, before her house, and indeed the whole town, should fall a prey to the flames. But he replied,—"Fear not, mother, be of good cheer; for never a whit shall this devouring flame hurt you or yours." And forthwith, going out to the door, he fell prostrate on the ground. And as he was yet praying, the direction of the wind changed, and, blowing from the west, drove away all further risk of the destruction of the town into which the man of the Lord had entered.

§ 22. And thus, in these two miracles, he imitated the miraculous powers of two Fathers. For first, by foreseeing and bringing to nought fantastic fires, he exhibited the power of the most reverend and holy father Benedict,[1] who by prayer drove away a seeming fire as it were of a burning furnace, which had been conjured up before the eyes of his disciples by the craft of the old enemy; and secondly, by overcoming in like manner and turning away the flames of a real fire, he manifested the power of the venerable bishop Marcellinus of Ancona,[2] who, when the same city was burning, opposed the fire by his prayers, and checked the flames, which a vast number of citizens could not extinguish by pouring water. Nor is it to be wondered at, that men who are perfect, and who faithfully serve God, should receive such power against the violence of flames, since they had already learned to extinguish and subdue, by the daily practice of virtue, both the incentives of the flesh, and "all the fiery darts of the wicked one," to which the words of the prophet are most applicable, "When thou shalt pass through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, and the fire shall not burn in thee." [Isai. xliii. 2.] But I, and those like me, who are conscious of our own frailty and sloth, are certain that we dare not do anything of this kind against material fire; yea, we are also uncertain that we shall be able to escape free from that unquenchable fire of chastisement which is to follow. But mighty and bounteous is the mercy of our Saviour, who bestows the grace of his protection on us, who are unworthy, not only to extinguish the flames of vices here, but also to escape from the flames of punishment in the time to come.

[1] The instance to which allusion is here made may be seen in Gregory's Life of Benedict, ap. Mabill. Acta SS. Ord. S. Bened. i. 9, from Greg. Dial. ii. 10, Opp. ii. 80, ed. fol. Par. 1675.

[2] This illustration also is taken from Gregory's Dialogues, lib. i. cap. vi. Opp. ii. 28. See also Acta SS. mens. Januar. i. 590.

CHAP. XV.[1] [A.D. 661.]—HOW HE CAST OUT A DEVIL FROM THE WIFE OF THE PREFECT, BEFORE HE HAD EVEN SEEN HER.

§ 23. BUT, as we declared a little above how great was the power which the same venerable Cudberct possessed over the pretended frauds of the devil, we shall now show how he could also prevail over his true and open fury. There was an officer of king[2] Ecgfrid's court, Hildmaer by name, who, with all his household, was earnest in the practice of devout works. He was in consequence particularly beloved by the blessed Cudberct; and when occasion offered, in consequence of his journey lying in that direction, he frequently visited this man's house. Now the wife of this officer, who was also much given to almsdeeds and other fruits of virtue, was suddenly seized by a devil, and so grievously tormented, that by gnashing her teeth, by uttering miserable groans, by throwing about her arms, and the other members of her body, in divers ways, she struck horror into all that beheld or heard her. And when she lay foaming at the mouth, beaten and seemingly at the very point of death, her husband mounted his horse, and riding in haste to the man of God, besought him, saying, "I beseech you, as my wife is very ill, and seems even now at the point of death, to send a priest to visit her before she die; and to administer to her the sacraments of the Body and Blood of our Lord; and I also beg that you will allow her body to be buried here in the holy places."[3] This he said because he was ashamed to confess that she, whom the man of the Lord had been accustomed to see always so sober, was now out of her wits. And when Cudberct had withdrawn a little, to consider what priest he should send with him, he suddenly learned in spirit, that she for whom her husband was entreating was stricken with no common infirmity, but that she was possessed by a devil; and returning, he said to her husband, "I must send no one, but I will go myself with you to visit her."

§ 24. And as they went on their journey, the man began to weep, and to reveal the sorrow of his heart by tears that overflowed his cheeks, for he was fearful that when Cudberct should find her possessed by a devil, he should begin to think that she had not served the Lord with an entire faith, but with a feigned faith. But the man of the Lord gently comforted him, saying, "Weep not, as if I were about to find your wife such as I would not. For I know, although you were ashamed to say so, that she is troubled with a devil; but I know also, that before we arrive there, the devil shall be put to flight, and she shall be delivered, and she herself shall joyfully come out to meet us on our arrival, and in her perfect mind she shall take these very reins in her hand, and beseeching us to enter quickly, will attentively wait upon us, as

[1] Vit. Metr. cap. xiii.; Vit. Anon. § 21.

[2] Beda here speaks by anticipation of Ecgfrid as king, for he had not ascended the throne at the time when this incident occurred.

[3] We here seem to gather that it was customary at this time to refuse burial within consecrated ground to such persons as died during the period in which they were subjected to demoniacal possession.

she has been wont to do. For it is not the wicked only that are subject to this torment, but, by the hidden judgment of God, the innocent also are sometimes held captive in this world by the devil, not only in body, but in mind also." And whilst Cudberct was giving utterance to these and such like words of consolation and instruction, as they drew near the house, the wicked spirit suddenly flew away, unable to endure the coming of the Holy Ghost, with whom the man of God was full. And the woman being loosed from his chains, as if awaking from a dead sleep, forthwith arose, and gratefully going to meet the man of God, she held the horse on which he was seated by the bridle; and presently, with wholly recovered vigour both of mind and body, she besought him to dismount quickly, and to enter, that he might bless her house; and giving him devout service, testified openly, how that at the first touch of his bridle she felt herself freed from all the trouble of her former vexation.

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CHAP. XVI.[1] [A.D. 664.]—OF HIS MANNER OF LIFE AND METHOD OF INSTRUCTION IN THE MONASTERY OF LINDISFARNE.

§ 25. AFTER this venerable servant of the Lord had spent many years in the monastery of Melrose, and had exhibited many shining proofs of spiritual virtues, the most revered father Eata, his abbot, transferred[2] him to the monastery which is situated in the island of Lindisfarne, there to teach the rules of monastic perfection with the authority of a superior, and to illustrate it by becoming an example of virtue; for at that time the same revered father governed each of these places as its abbot. And let no one marvel that in this same island of Lindisfarne, which is of very small extent, there should be, as we mentioned above, the seat of a bishop, and at the same time, as we now state, the residence of an abbot and monks. For so it is in truth. For one and the same habitation of the servants of God contains both at the same time; yea, all whom it contains are monks. For Aidan, who was the first bishop of this place, was a monk, and was always wont to lead a monastic life along with all his people. Hence after him all the bishops of that place until this day exercise the episcopal function in such sort, that while the abbot, who is chosen by the bishop with the consent of the brethren, governs the monastery, all the priests, deacons, chanters, readers, and the other ecclesiastical orders, observe in all things the monastic rule with the bishop himself. The blessed pope Gregory showed how much he loved this rule of life when, in reply to Augustine, whom he had sent as the first bishop of the English, when he asked how bishops ought to associate with their clergy, he says[3] amongst other things,—"But because you, my brother, having been instructed in the rules of a monastery, ought not to live apart from your clergy, you ought to institute in the

[1] Vit. Metr. cap. xiv.; Vit. Anon. § 23.

[2] Simeon of Durham states that this change of residence occurred A.D. 664, lib. i. cap. vi.

[3] See Eccl. Hist. § 59.

church of the Angles, which by God's means has been lately brought to the faith, that conversation which was in use in the primitive church among our forefathers in the faith, wherein no one said that 'any of those things which they possessed was their own, but all things were in common.'" [Acts iv. 32.] The man of God accordingly, on his arrival in the church or monastery of Lindisfarne, immediately delivered the monastic institutes to the brethren, both by his example and teaching; he also, according to his wont, stirred up by frequent visitation the zeal of the common people who resided in the surrounding neighbourhood, to seek after and desire heavenly things. He further became still more famous for miracles; by the instance of his prayers he restored to their former health many that were taken with divers sicknesses and torments; he cured some that were vexed by unclean spirits, not only when present, by touching them, by prayer, by command, by exorcism, but even when absent he did the same by prayer only, or by predicting their cure; amongst whom was also the wife of that officer of whom we have already spoken.

§ 26. Now there were in the monastery certain monks who chose rather to follow their ancient custom than to obey the new rule. These, nevertheless, he overcame by the modest power of his patience, and by daily practice he brought them by little and little to a better disposition. As he frequently discoursed in the assembly of the brethren[1] about the rule, when he might well have been wearied out with the sharp remarks of those that spoke against it, he would rise up suddenly, and dismissing the assembly with a placid mind and countenance, depart. But nevertheless, on the following day, as if he had suffered no opposition the day before, he repeated the same admonitions to the same audience, until by degrees he brought them round, as we have said, to what he wished. For he was a man specially endowed with the grace of patience, and most invincible in stoutly enduring all opposition that might occur, whether to mind or body. At the same time he bore a cheerful countenance amid every distress that might happen, so that it was clearly understood that he despised outward tribulations by the inward consolations of the Holy Spirit.

§ 27. He was also so zealous in watching and prayer, that it may be believed that sometimes he passed three or four continuous nights in watching; since during that period he neither came to his own bed, nor had he any other place out of the dormitory of the brethren wherein he could repose. And during this time he either gave himself up to prayer alone in some secret place, or wrought at some handicraft in the intervals of psalmody, and drove away the drowsiness of sleep by manual labour; or else he went round the island, examining in his pious researches into the condi-

[1] Probably at the meeting of the chapter of the brethren, which was held daily. According to Martene, the third matter which engaged the attention of the assembled monks was the reading of the rule, and then it was explained by the prior, or abbot, or one to whom that office had been delegated. It was during these daily readings that Cuthbert was subjected to the trials here mentioned. See Martene, De Antiq. Monach. Ritibus, I. v. § 1, 20.

tion of each part of it, and thus shortening the length of psalmody and watching by exercise. Again, he was wont to rebuke the faintheartedness of the brethren, who took it ill when they were roused (perhaps after considerable importunity) from their slumber at night or at noon-day, saying, "No one annoys me in rousing me from sleep; yea, rather, he that calls me up gladdens me; for he causes me to shake off the torpor of sleep, and awakes me to do or think something profitable." So much was he habituated to compunction, and so ardently did he burn with heavenly desires, that when he celebrated the solemnities of mass, he could not complete the office without a profusion of tears. Moreover, whilst he was in the regular course celebrating the mysteries of our Lord's passion, he would himself imitate what he was doing, by offering himself, namely, to God in contrition of heart. And when the people were standing at the passage,[1] "Lift up your hearts," and "Let us give thanks to our Lord God," he himself did so rather by lifting up his heart than his voice, and by groaning rather than by chanting. He possessed an ardent zeal for justice, in reproving sinners; yet in the spirit of meekness he was modest in pardoning the repentant; so that sometimes, when his penitents were confessing their sins to him, he himself would be the first to take compassion on their infirmities by shedding tears; and inasmuch as he was himself just, he was also the first to point out beforehand by his example what ought to be done by the sinner. His raiment was very ordinary; and he used such moderation in this respect that he was not remarkable either for neatness or slovenliness. Hence even to this day, in the same monastery, it is an observance founded upon his example, that no one should wear garments of varied or costly colour, but that each should be contented with that kind of vesture which the natural colour of the wool supplies.

§ 28. By these and such like spiritual exercises as these, the venerable man provoked the affection of the good to imitate him, and at the same time recalled from the obstinacy of their error the wicked and rebellious to a regular life.

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CHAP. XVII.[2] [A.D. 676.]—HOW HE MADE A HABITATION FOR HIMSELF IN THE ISLAND OF FARNE, AFTER HAVING DRIVEN OUT THE EVIL SPIRITS THAT INFESTED IT.

§ 29. AND after he had passed some considerable[3] number of years in the same monastery, he, greatly rejoicing, at length departed, accompanied by the good wishes as well of his abbot, as also by those of all the brethren, to his long-coveted, desired, and eagerly sought secret solitude. For he rejoiced, that after a long

[1] It may be scarce necessary to remark, that these words are found in the Canon of the Mass. See Palmer on the Liturgy, ii. 110.

[2] Vit. Anon. § 23; Vit. Metr. cap. xv.

[3] This was after a residence of twelve years at Lindisfarne, which, dating from A.D. 664, carries us on to 676.

fulfilment of active conversation, he was now permitted to ascend to the leisure of divine speculation; he rejoiced that he had now reached the lot of those of whom we sing in the Psalm:—"The saints shall go from virtue to virtue: the God of gods shall be seen in Sion." [Ps. lxxxiv. al. lxxxiii. 7.] For indeed, even when he first began to learn the rudiments of a solitary life, he used to withdraw into a certain place,[1] which yet is discernible on the outside of his cell, than which it is more secluded. And when he had for a while learned, as a recluse, to contend there with the invisible enemy by prayer and fasting, then in course of time he ventured still higher, and sought a place of conflict further off, and more remote from the abode of men. There is an island in the middle of the sea named Farne. Unlike that of Lindisfarne, which twice daily becomes an island, by the advancing tide, which the Greeks call Rheuma, and twice, on the reflux of the tide, is again joined to the main land, the island of Farne is distant some thousand paces to the east of this semi-island, and consequently is girt about on all sides by the deep and boundless ocean. Previous to the arrival of the servant of the Lord, Cudberct, no husbandman had been able to dwell with comfort on this island, on account of its being infested by demoniacal phantoms, who made it their abode. But as soon as the soldier of Christ landed there, armed with the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, [Ephes. vi. 16, 17,] all the fiery darts of the most evil one were quenched, and the wicked enemy himself, with the whole crowd of his followers, was put to flight.

§ 30. Thus this soldier of Christ, in virtue of conquest over the array of tyrants, became the monarch of the land which he had invaded; he founded a city suitable to his empire, and erected houses therein equally suitable to his city. Now this[2] dwelling-place was nearly circular, in measure from wall to wall about four or five perches. The wall itself externally was higher than the stature of a man; but inwardly, by cutting the living rock, the pious inhabitant thereof made it much higher, in order by this means to curb the petulance of his eyes as well as of his thoughts, and to raise up the whole bent of his mind to heavenly desires, since he could behold nothing from his mansion except heaven. He constructed this wall, not of hewn stone, nor of brick and mortar, but of unwrought stones and turf, which he dug out of the centre of the place. Of these stones some were of such a size that it seemed scarcely possible for four men to lift them; nevertheless it was discovered that he had brought them from another place and put them on the wall, assisted by heavenly aid. His dwelling-place was divided into two parts; an oratory, namely, and another dwelling suitable for common uses. He constructed the walls of both by digging round, or by cutting out much of the natural earth inside and outwardly; but the roof was formed of rough beams,

[1] This locality is still visible, at one of the extremities of the island of Lindisfarne; see also § 71.

[2] All the places mentioned by Beda are yet clearly distinguishable on this most interesting island.

and thatched with straw. Moreover there was a larger house at the landing-place of the island, in which the monks when they came to see him might be received and rest; and not far from this there was a fountain of water adapted for the supply of their wants.

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CHAP. XVIII.[1] [A.D. 676.]—HOW HE PRODUCED WATER OUT OF THE DRY LAND BY HIS PRAYERS, AND OF THE ADVANCEMENT WHICH HE MADE AS AN ANCHORITE.

§ 31. NEVERTHELESS, his own abode, from being founded on a very hard soil, yea almost a complete rock, was in want of water. Wherefore the man of God, having summoned the brethren,—for he had not as yet totally secluded himself from the sight of those that visited the island,—"You see," he said, "that my abode is void of water; but let us ask, I beseech you, Him who 'turned the rock into a pool of water, and the stony hill into fountains of waters,' [Ps. cxiv. 8,] that, 'not unto us, but to his name giving the glory,' [Ps. cxv. 1,] He would vouchsafe to open for us also, from this stony rock, a vein of water. Let us dig then in the middle of my little dwelling, for I believe that 'He will give us to drink of the torrent of his pleasure.'" [Ps. xxxvi. 8.] They accordingly dug a pit, and on the morrow they found it full of water flowing up from within. And it was beyond doubt that this water was drawn out of that very dry and very hard ground by the prayers of the man of God; for it was confined in a marvellous manner within its basin, so that it neither wet the pavement by bubbling over, nor did it ever fail by becoming exhausted; the grace of the Giver so regulating the supply that it never exceeded what the receiver required, nor was abundance ever wanting for sustaining his necessities.

§ 32. Having constructed the above abode and outhouses with the aid of the brethren, Cudberct, the man of God, began now to dwell alone. At first, however, when the brethren came to visit him, he was wont to go out of his cell and minister to them. Thus he would devoutly wash their feet with warm water; and he in his turn was forced at times by them to take off his shoes and to suffer them to wash his feet. For so entirely had he put off all care as to the body, and so had given himself up to the care of the soul alone, that when once he had put on his long hose, which were made of hide,[2] he used to wear them for months together. Yea, with the exception of once at Easter,[3] it may be said that he never took them off again for a year until the return of the

[1] Vit. Anon. § 28; Vit. Metr. cap. xvi.

[2] "... calceatus tibracis." *Orig.* Mabillon (sec. ii. p. 858) remarks that they were still in his day called "des tricouses" in France.

[3] The custom here alluded to may be illustrated by the following extract from a Consuetudianary printed by Martene, De Antiq. Eccl. Disciplina, cap. xxii. (p. 346, ed. 1706): "... dum Tertia dicitur, calceamenta quæ danda sunt fratribus in capitulo per ordinem suspendantur in medio in quatuor perticas et totidem columnis affixis sustentantes eas. ... Post sermonem factum surgant camerarii, unus hic et alius inde, et calceamenta fratribus distribuant, sicut conscripta sunt."

Pasch, when he was unshod for the ceremony of washing the feet, which is wont to take place on Maundy Thursday.[1] Hence on account of his frequent prayers and genuflections, which he performed when thus hosed, it was discovered that he had an oblong and extensive callosity at the juncture of the feet and legs. After this, as his zeal for perfection[2] increased, he shut himself up in his monastery[3] apart from the sight of men, and learnt to lead a solitary life in fastings, prayers, and watchings, rarely holding converse from within with those that came to him, and this only by the window. This he at first opened, so that he was both seen by the monks, and the monks to whom he spoke rejoiced when they saw him; but in process of time he shut this up also, and never unclosed it, except for the sake of giving his blessing, or for some other assured necessity.

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CHAP. XIX.[4] [A.D. 676.]—HOW BY A WORD HE DROVE AWAY A FLOCK OF BIRDS FROM A CROP OF CORN WHICH HE HAD SOWN WITH HIS OWN HANDS.

§ 33. AT the beginning of his seclusion he accepted a little bread from the monks for his food, and drank of his fountain; but afterwards he judged it more suitable to live by the labour of his own hands, according to the example of the fathers. He asked them therefore to bring him some implements of husbandry wherewith to till the land, and some wheat which he might sow; but when midsummer arrived there were no symptoms that the land which he had sowed in spring was bearing fruit. Hence, when the monks next visited him according to their custom, he said to them, "Perhaps it is either the nature of the soil, or it is the will of God that wheat should not grow for me in this place; bring barley, I pray you, for perhaps it can grow. But if God will not give increase to it either, it is better for me to return to the monastery than to be maintained here by the labours of others. Upon this they brought him some barley, which he put into the earth, a long time after the proper season for sowing had passed, and when it was beyond all hope of producing fruit; but it forthwith sprang up luxuriantly, and produced an abundant crop. Now as it was beginning to ripen, birds came and lighted to feed thereon in flocks. The pious servant of Christ was wont to relate how he got rid of this annoyance; for as he was of a joyful and affable demeanour he

[1] "... in cœna Domini fieri solet." *Orig.* On this custom, founded on the example and command of our Lord (John xiii. 4, 5, 14, 15), see the work of Martene last quoted, p. 277, and the same author, De Antiq. Monach. Ritibus, III. xiii. § 50, *seq.*

[2] The reader who wishes to understand the full meaning of the theory of Counsels of Perfection, or Evangelical Counsels, to which allusion is here made, will do well to consult, on the one hand, Th. Aquin. Summ. 1, 2, q. 108, art. 4; Bellarm. De Monach. capp. vii. viii.; and on the other, Morton's Protestant's Appeal, p. 587; Fulke on the Rhemish Test. Matt. xix. §§ 7, 10; Acts ii. § 12; J. Gerhard, Confessio Catholica, iv. 813, ed. 1637.

[3] Here, and frequently elsewhere, Beda uses the word "monastery" in its primitive sense for the dwelling-place of one who wishes to live in solitude.

[4] Vit. Metr. cap. xvii. There is no corresponding passage in the Anonymous Life; it would appear, therefore, that this is one of the more recent Lindisfarne additions.

was accustomed to confirm the faith of his hearers by relating some of those things which he had himself obtained by faith. And advancing towards the birds,—"Why do you touch," he said, "the grain which you have not sown? Do you think that you have more need of it than I? If, nevertheless, you have obtained leave of God to do this, do what He allows you; but if not, depart, and do no injury to the goods of another." He had scarcely spoken when the whole flight of birds departed at the first word of command, and from that time forward desisted from attacking his harvest. And here also the venerable servant of the Lord imitated the deeds of two fathers in two miracles; in the water, namely, that sprang from the rock, the deed of the blessed father Benedict,[1] who by the like command, and in the same manner, is recorded to have wrought a similar miracle, but more abundantly on this account, because there were many who suffered from a scarcity of water. Moreover, in driving away the birds from his harvest, he followed the example of the most reverend and most holy father Anthony,[2] who by a single word restrained the wild asses from injuring the little garden which he had planted.

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CHAP. XX.[3] [A.D. 676.]—IN WHAT MANNER TWO CROWS SOUGHT TO APPEASE BY PRAYERS AND GIFTS THE MAN OF GOD FOR THE INJURY WHICH THEY HAD DONE HIM.

§ 34. I WILL now relate a certain miracle wrought by the blessed Cudberct after the example of the aforesaid father Benedict,[4] wherein the obedience and humility of birds condemns human pride and contumacy. Two crows had been for a long time accustomed to settle on the island, and one day the man of God observed that as they were building their nest they tore with their beaks at the roof of the house which had been constructed for the use of the monks, which I have mentioned above;[5] and as they were carrying away in their beaks the straw with which it was covered, for the building of their nest, he checked them by a gentle movement of the hand, and forbade them to do any further injury to the house of the brethren; and on their neglecting his injunction,—"In the name," he said, "of Jesus Christ, depart forthwith, and presume not henceforth to abide in a place where you have wrought an injury." Scarcely had he ended these words when forthwith they departed mournfully. And after three days one of the birds returned, and finding the servant of the Lord employed in digging, he lighted before him, and approaching him, spread out his wings, bowing his head, and uttering humbled notes, and seemed by these tokens to solicit forgiveness to the best of his ability. Whereupon the venerable father, understanding its language, gave them leave to come

[1] See Gregorii Magni Dial. ii. 5; Acta SS. Ord. S. Bened. i. 6, § 12.
[2] See Vit. Sanctor. ed. Surii, i. 121, ed. 1581.
[3] Vit. Anon. § 27; Vit. Metr. cap. xviii.
[4] See Gregorii Magni Dial. ii. 8; Acta SS. Ord. S. Bened. i. 7, § 15.
[5] See § 29.

again to the island. Having obtained what it wished, the bird immediately departed to fetch its companion, and shortly after both of them returned and brought with them a suitable gift, namely, half of a flitch of fat bacon, which the man of God was wont afterwards frequently to show to the monks that came to see him, and to give it them wherewith to grease their shoes, calling them to witness how carefully men ought to strive to maintain obedience and to uphold humility, since even a proud bird, by its entreaties, lamentations, and gifts, hastened to wash away the injury which it had done to mankind. And in fine, that they might afford an example of amendment to men, during many subsequent years the birds remained on that island and built their nests; but never after did they venture to harm any person. Nor let it seem absurd to any one to derive a lesson of virtue from birds, since Solomon saith, "Go to the ant, O sluggard, and consider her ways and learn wisdom." [Prov. vi. 6.]

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CHAP. XXI.[1] [A.D. 676.]—HOW EVEN THE SEA MINISTERED TO HIS NECESSITIES.

§ 35. AND not only did the fowls of the air and the creatures of the sea render service to the venerable man, but even also the sea itself did the same, like the air and fire, as we have seen above.[2] Nor is it to be wondered at that every creature should minister to the commands and wishes of him who serves the Author of all creatures with a faithful and entire heart. And if for the most part we have lost dominion over the creature, it is on this account, because we have neglected to serve the Lord and Creator of all. Now the sea itself, I say, wrought willing service to the servant of Christ when he had need. For when he was disposed to build a little hut for himself in his monastery, suited to his daily necessities, he selected a spot by the sea-side, where the dashing of the frequent waves had hollowed out the rock into a deep and narrow cleft,[3] about the width of twelve feet, across which a foundation was required to be thrown. He besought therefore the monks, that when they next came to visit him they would bring a piece of wood twelve feet long to form the base of the little building, a request which they very readily promised to fulfil. But after they had received his benediction and departed home, the request of their father passed out of mind, and on their next return on the appointed day they came without that which they had promised to bring. After a kind reception, and when he had commended them to God with his usual prayer, he asked them saying, "Where is the piece of timber which I asked you to bring?" And calling to mind what he had requested and what they had forgotten, they besought pardon for the neglect which they confessed. But he meekly consoled them with gentle words, and bade them stay in the island and rest themselves till morning, saying, "I believe that God will not forget my wish and my neces-

[1] Vit. Anon. § 26; Vit. Metr. cap. xix.
[2] Namely, in chapters iii. x. xiii. xiv. xvii.
[3] Still distinctly visible on the island.

sity." They accordingly remained as he bade them, and rising in the morning they perceived that the night-tide of the ocean had drifted in a beam of wood of the abovenamed size, and laid it on shore at the very place where it was required to be used in the building. Seeing this, they presently marvelled greatly at the holiness of the venerable man, to whose necessities even the elements ministered, and with due shame they blamed their own tardiness, seeing that even the insensible ocean taught them how the saints are to be obeyed.

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CHAP. XXII.[1] [A.D. 676.]—HOW HE GAVE COUNSELS OF SALVATION TO MANY WHO CAME TO HIM, AND HOW HE EXPOSED THE FEEBLE SNARES OF THE OLD ENEMY.

§ 36. Now, allured by the fame of his virtues, a great many persons, not only from the neighbouring district of Lindisfarne, but also from the remoter parts of Britain, came to the man of God to confess the sins which they had committed, or to lay before him the temptations of demons, under which they suffered, or at least those with which they were afflicted in common with all men; for by laying bare their distresses to one of so great sanctity they hoped to receive consolation. Nor did their hope deceive them. For no one departed from him without the joy of consolation, and the sorrow of mind which each man brought with him accompanied him no more on his departure. For Cudberct knew how to refresh the mourner with pious exhortation, he knew how to remind those that were in tribulation of the joys of heavenly life, and to show that both the smiles and the frowns of this world are equally transient; and he was skilled in revealing to those that were tempted the manifold wiles of the old enemy. He showed how readily the soul that was void of brotherly or divine love might be taken prisoner, and how he that walked in the strength of entire faith might pass safely through the snares of the adversary, with the Lord's assistance, like as through the threads of a spider's web. "How often," he said, "have they sent me headlong from the lofty rocks? How often have they thrown stones at me, as if to slay me? How often have they raised up fantastic temptations of one kind or another to frighten me, and attempted to drive me from this place of contest? Yet nevertheless they have never been able to inflict any injury upon my body, nor to touch my mind with fear."

§ 37. This also he used frequently to intimate to the brethren, that they should not marvel at his conversation as being singularly exalted, because he had chosen to despise the cares of the world, and in preference to live in secret. "But," he said, "the life of monks is more justly to be wondered at, seeing they are subject in all things to the command of the abbot, by whose will all their hours of vigils, prayers, fasting, and manual labour are regulated. And I have known very many of those, who far surpass my littleness both in purity of mind and in the height of prophetic grace. Of these there is the venerable servant of Christ, Boisil, one to be

[1] Vit. Metr. cap. xx.

named with all honour, who in his old age brought me up a long time ago in the monastery of Melrose, and during his instruction he foretold with prophetic truth all things which were to happen to me, and one only of all that he foretold remains, which I would were never to be fulfilled." Now by this he meant what the above-named servant of Christ had signified, namely, that he should be raised to the episcopal dignity, at the thoughts of which, through his earnest desire of a more secluded life, he was in no small degree troubled.

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CHAP. XXIII.[1] [A.D. 676.]—HOW THE ABBESS AELFLED AND ONE OF HER NUNS WERE HEALED OF THEIR INFIRMITY BY HIS GIRDLE.

§ 38. NEITHER did miraculous cures cease to be wrought by the man of God, even when he had entirely withdrawn from human intercourse. The venerable handmaid of Christ,[2] Aelfled, who presided with motherly piety, amid the joys of virginity, over a[3] numerous band of the servants of Christ, and who increased the lustre of her royal[4] lineage with the higher nobility of a more exalted virtue, always bore a singular affection for the man of God. At this time, as she herself afterwards told the very reverend Herefrid, priest of the church of Lindisfarne, from whom I learned this narrative, she was stricken for a length of time with a very grievous illness, which reduced her to such a state that she seemed at the point of death. But when the physicians were unable to provide any remedy, divine grace, suddenly acting inwardly, saved her, and drew her back by little and little from death, although she was yet far from being entirely cured. For although the internal pain left her, and the vigour of her limbs returned, yet she had no power whatever either to walk or to stand, so that she could not raise herself upright, nor move except on all fours, like a quadruped. And this lasted so long that she began with sorrow to fear that her weakness would be permanent, for she had long since despaired of obtaining any remedy from physicians. One day, amid the pressure of her sad thoughts, the blessed and quiet conversation of the reverend father Cudberct came into her mind, and she said, "I would that I had something belonging to my dear Cudberct, for I know of a surety, and I trust in the Lord, that I should soon be healed!" And not long after there arrived one who brought with him a linen girdle, which Cudberct had sent to her. Whereupon she greatly rejoiced in the gift; and comprehending that her desire had been already communicated to the holy man by heaven, she girt it round her, and next morning she was able to stand erect, and on the third day she was restored to perfect health.

[1] This is a chapter added by Beda, not only to the anonymous legend, but also to his own metrical narrative. It is derived, as he states, from the authority of Herefrid, concerning whom see § 1.

[2] Concerning Elfleda see the Acta SS. mens. Feb. ii. 178.

[3] She was abbess of the monastery which had been founded by Hilda at Whitby, in Yorkshire.

[4] She was of royal descent on both sides of her pedigree; her father being Osuiu, king of Bernicia, and her mother, Eanfleda, being daughter of Eadwin, king of Deira.

§ 39. Now a few days afterwards one of the virgins of the same monastery began to suffer from an intolerable pain in her head; and, as her suffering increased daily, she appeared to be brought to the verge of the grave. Her venerable abbess came to visit her; and when she saw her so grievously afflicted, she took the same girdle of the man of God, and caused it to be bound round her head, and presently the pain departed, so that she was healed the same day. She took off the girdle, and laid it up in her coffer; but when the abbess asked her for it, some days after, it was no longer in the coffer, nor was it ever afterwards found. It is obvious that this was done by divine dispensation, that by a miracle of healing, twice repeated, the sanctity of the God-beloved father might be manifested to the faithful, and that from henceforth the occasion of doubting his sanctity should be taken away from the incredulous. For if this same girdle were always present, the sick would always wish to flock to it; and whilst some one of these might not perhaps deserve to be healed of his infirmity, exception might be taken from its failure in curing one who was perhaps unworthy of being cured. Wherefore, by the provident dispensation of heavenly piety, as was said above, after the faith of believers had been confirmed, then immediately the opportunity for detraction was withdrawn from the ill-will of the sceptic.

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### Chap. XXIV.[1] [A.D. 684.]—What he foretold to the same Aelfleda on her inquiry as to the Life of King Ecgfrid, and of his own Episcopacy.

§ 40. At another[2] time, the same most reverend virgin and mother of Christ's virgins, Aelflaed, sent to the man of God, adjuring him in the name of the Lord that he would condescend to come to converse with her on some pressing affairs. Cudberct accordingly went on board ship, accompanied by some of the brethren, and came to the island which from its situation in the front of the mouth of the river Coquet[3] receives its name from the same, and is celebrated for its community of monks, for there it was that the aforesaid abbess had requested him to meet her. After the abbess had been satisfied with his replies to her many inquiries, on a sudden, while he was yet speaking, she fell at his feet, and adjured him by the terrible and venerable name of the heavenly King and his angels, to tell her how long Ecgfrid, her brother, should live and rule over the kingdom of the Angles: "For I know," she said, "that from the spirit of prophecy, which you possess abundantly, you can even do this, if you will." But he, trembling at her adjuration, and not wishing openly to reveal the secret which she asked, "It is marvellous," he said, "that you, a woman who are wise and well instructed in the holy Scriptures

[1] See Vit. Metr. cap. xxi.; Vit. Anon. § 28.

[2] The date of this narrative is ascertained by observing that it occurred a year before the death of king Ecgfrid, which took place 20th May, 685.

[3] The river Coquet runs through the county of Northumberland, and gives its name to an island opposite to the spot where it falls into the sea, a few miles to the south of Cudberct's residence at Farne. It was consequently a middle point between the residence of the two parties who there met.

should speak of the term of human life as if it were long, seeing, as the Psalmist says, 'Our years shall be considered as a spider,' [Ps. xc., al. lxxxix. 10;] and that Solomon warns us, that 'If a man live many years and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many,' [Eccles. xi. 8;] which, when they come, reprove the past of vanity. How much more should he to whom only one year of life remains seem to have lived a short time, when death shall stand at his gates?"

§ 41. The abbess, on hearing this, lamented with floods of tears his direful presage, and having wiped her face, her feminine boldness induced her again to adjure him by the majesty of the sovereign divinity to tell her, whom he should have as an heir of his kingdom, since he had neither children nor brothers? Cudberct was silent for a short time. "Say not," he said, "that he is without children, for he shall have a successor whom you may embrace like as you do Ecgfrid himself, with sisterly affection." But she continued, "Tell me, I beseech thee, where he is now?" And he said, "You see this mighty and wide ocean, with how many islands it abounds. It is easy for God from one of these to provide a ruler for the kingdom of the Angles." Wherefore he understood that he spoke of Aldfrid,[1] who was said to be the son of Ecgfrid's father, and who at that time lived in exile, for the sake of studying letters, in the islands of the Scots.[2] Now Aelflaed knew that Ecgfrid designed to make Cudberct a bishop, and, wishing to discover whether his intention would be put into execution, she began by saying, "Oh! how the hearts of mortals are divided by divers intentions! Some enjoy the riches which they have obtained; others, loving riches, are always in want. You have neglected the glory of the world, though it is offered to you; and although you might attain to the episcopate, than which nothing is more exalted among mortals, you prefer the cloister of your desert to this dignity." Then he said, "I know that I am not worthy of so high a station; nevertheless, I cannot escape anywhere from the decree of the Ruler of heaven, who, if He has decreed that I be subjected to such a burthen, I believe that He will restore me to freedom shortly after; and perhaps after not more than two years are past, may send me back to the wonted rest of my beloved solitude. But I command you, in the name of our Lord and Saviour, that you tell this which you have heard to no one till after my death." And when he had explained to her many other things about which she inquired, and had instructed her in those things about which she had need, he returned to his island and monastery, and sedulously pursued the solitary life which he had begun.

§ 42. And not long after,[3] a well-attended synod[4] having been assembled in the presence of the very pious and God-beloved king Ecgfrid, over which archbishop Theodore of blessed memory presided, Cudberct was elected to the bishopric of Lindisfarne with

[1] See the Eccl. Hist. IV. xxvi. § 341.
[2] The author of the anonymous legend states that he was resident at Iona.
[3] Namely, in the autumn of A.D. 684.
[4] See Eccl. Hist. IV. xxviii. § 347.

the unanimous consent of all. And when, in spite of numerous messengers and letters having been sent to him, he could not be dragged from his retreat, the king himself, in company with the holy prelate Trumuine, as well as many other religious and honourable men, at length sailed to the island; and there all, kneeling down, with tears adjured him by the Lord to consent; nor did they desist till they drew him, filled also with tears, from his beloved seclusion, and dragged him before the synod. On his arrival there, in spite of his great reluctance, his own will was overcome by the unanimous will of all assembled, and he was constrained to bow his neck to the yoke of the bishopric. Nevertheless, his ordination [1] did not follow immediately, nor till the winter, which was then at hand, had passed. And further, to fulfil in all respects the prophetic words of Cudberct, Ecgfrid was slain [20th May, 685] the year after by the sword of the Picts. And Aldfrid, his bastard-brother, who for a considerable time previous had gone into voluntary exile for the sake of acquiring learning, through the love of wisdom, in the region of the Scots, was raised to the kingdom in his stead.

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CHAP. XXV.[2] [A.D. 684.]—HOW, AFTER HE WAS CHOSEN BISHOP, HE CURED THE SICK SERVANT OF AN EARL WITH CONSECRATED WATER.

§ 43. AFTER his election to the episcopate, Cudberct, the servant of the Lord, returned to the island, where for some short time he continued, with his wonted devotion, to wrestle in secret for the Lord, till Eata, the venerable bishop, called him forth and summoned him to a conference with himself at Melrose. And as he was returning home from this interview, a certain earl[3] of king Ecgfrid met him, and earnestly besought him to turn aside to give his blessing to his village and household. When he had come thither and had been most cordially received by all, the nobleman informed him of the illness of one of his servants, saying, "I thank God, most holy father, that you have vouchsafed to visit us and to enter into my house; and verily, we all believe that your visit will be a great gain to us, both of soul and body. For we have a servant now for a long time tormented with a very grievous infirmity, and this very day he suffers such an excess of pain that he seems liker a dying man than one who is sick; for the lower part of his body is already dead, and no appearance of life remains, except a faint breathing from his mouth and nostrils. Cudberct forthwith blessed some water, and gave it to a servant of the earl, whose name is Baldhelm, who is living to this day, and is now a priest in the church of Lindisfarne, where he leads a holy life, and holds it sweeter than honey to relate the miracles of the man of God to all who desire to know them, and who told me this very

[1] Namely, at York, on Easter-day, 26th March, 685. See the Eccl. Hist. IV. xxviii. § 347.

[2] Vit. Anon. § 36.

[3] The Lindisfarne monk Baldhelm, who (as Beda here tells us) was an eye-witness of this occurrence, states that the earl's name was Sibba. See § 36 of that narrative.

miracle which I now relate. The man of God, therefore, giving the blessed water to him, "Go," says he, "and give this to the sick person to taste." Baldhelm took it to the sick man as he was desired, and as he was pouring a little of it, for the third time, into his mouth, forthwith the patient, contrary to his wont, fell into a deep and tranquil sleep. Now it was about eventide, and having passed the night in silence, on his master visiting him next morning, he found him restored to perfect health.

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CHAP. XXVI.[1] [A.D. 684.]—OF HIS CONDUCT IN HIS BISHOPRIC.

§ 44. THE venerable servant of the Lord, Cudberct, adorned the episcopal order which he had received, according to apostolic precept and example, with the practice of works of virtue. He protected the flock committed to his charge by assiduous prayer, and called them to the things of heaven by wholesome admonitions; and, what above all is delightful in those who instruct, he showed the way by being the first to practise what he himself taught.[2] He rescued the friendless from the hand of the more powerful; the needy and the poor from the hands of the oppressor. He diligently comforted the sad and feeble-minded; but he did not neglect to call back those that rejoiced amiss, to that becoming sorrow which is according to God. He was diligent in practising his wonted self-denial, and rejoiced, amid the assemblages of crowds, to observe with regularity the rigour of the monastic life. He gave food to the hungry, clothing to those that were shivering with cold, and all his life was marked with the other signs which betokened a bishop indeed. Miraculous signs gave testimony to his inner virtues; that is, to those of the soul as well as to those which shone outwardly; some few examples of which we have taken care to commit to remembrance.

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CHAP. XXVII.[3] [A.D 685.]—HOW WHEN ABSENT HE SAW IN SPIRIT THE DEATH OF KING ECGFRID, AND HIS WARFARE, WHICH HE HAD FORMERLY FORETOLD.

§ 45. Now while king Ecgfrid, with rash daring, was leading his army against the Picts,[4] and was laying waste their kingdom with atrocious cruelty, Cudberct, the man of the Lord, knowing that the time was at hand which he had foretold the year before to the king's sister when she questioned him, namely, that Ecgfrid had not more than a single year to live, came to the city of Lugubaliæa,[5] (which is corruptly called Luel by the Angles,) to speak to the queen,[6] who had resolved to await there the issue of the campaign,

[1] Vit Metr. cap. xxii.; Vit. Anon. §§ 30, 31.
[2] See this more fully illustrated by Beda in his Eccl. Hist. IV. xxviii. § 348.
[3] Vit. Metr. cap. xxix.; Vit. Anon. § 37.
[4] See Eccl. Hist. IV. xxvi. § 341, where it is stated that Cudberct strongly opposed this measure.
[5] Now Carlisle.
[6] Namely, Eormenburga, of the royal family of Kent, whom he took to his second wife; his first wife, Etheldretha, was the celebrated abbess of Ely. See Liber Eliensis, p. 39.

in the monastery of her sister. Now, next day, as[1] some of the citizens were taking him round for the purpose of showing him the walls of the city, and a fountain[2] of marvellous workmanship, constructed formerly by the Romans,[3] he suddenly became disturbed in spirit, and leaning on his staff he bent down his face sadly to the ground, and again raising himself up, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and groaning deeply, he muttered softly :—"Perhaps at this very moment the hazard of the battle is over." And a priest who was standing by, comprehending of whom he spake, impelled by thoughtless haste, answered and said :—"How do you know this?" But Cudberct, not wishing to say more of what had been revealed to him :—"Do not you see," he said, "how marvellously changed and disturbed the air is? and who among mortals is sufficient to search out the judgments of God?" Nevertheless he forthwith went to the queen and spake to her secretly, (for this happened on a Saturday,) and he said to her :—"See that you mount your chariot early at the dawn of next Monday,[4]—for it is not lawful to ride in a chariot on the Lord's-day—and go with as much haste as possible to the royal city,[5] lest haply the king should be slain. But as I am engaged to-morrow to dedicate the church of a neighbouring monastery, I will follow you immediately after I have accomplished the ceremony of the dedication."

§ 46. Now Sunday being come, he preached the word of God to the brethren of the monastery, and as he finished his address, and while all who were present were approving, he resumed his discourse. "I beseech you," he continued, "most beloved brethren, according to the warning of the apostle, 'Watch, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, and be strong,' [1 Cor. xvi. 13,] lest haply some temptation come and find you unprepared. Wherefore, be ever mindful of that precept of the Lord, 'Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.'" [Mark xiv. 38.] Now his audience thought that he spoke of the return of the pestilence, which not long before[6] had carried away some of their number, and spread desolation throughout the whole neighbourhood far and wide. Cudberct however resumed :—"Once on a time," he said, "when I was dwelling as a recluse in my island, there came to me some of the monks, on the holy day of our Lord's nativity, and they besought me to come out of my poor abode and dwelling-

[1] The writer of the anonymous legend informs us that the "præpositus civitatis," named Waga, (hitherto printed Paga, but incorrectly,) accompanied Cudberct and the rest of the visitors in their inspection of the curiosities.

[2] The description of a fountain, or a building supposed to have been one, in which the traces of Roman workmanship are still discernible, is given in Lyson's Magna Brit. Cumberland, p. ccvii. Smith appears to have had the same information from Nicolson, then bishop of Carlisle.

[3] On the frequency of Roman remains at Carlisle, see Camd. Brit. col. 1024.

[4] . . . "Secunda Sabbati," on the second day of the week, that is, on Monday.

[5] . . . "Ad Regiam Civitatem;" probably to the strongly fortified castle of Bamborough, which was known at that time by the designation of the Royal City. See Eccl. Hist. §§ 166, 184, 193.

[6] England and Ireland had been subjected to the ravages of a fatal pestilence in the years 681,682, and 683, concerning which, see the Eccl. Hist. IV. xiv.; the Annales Cambriæ, (ap. Petrie and Hardy,) p. 833; and the Annals of Ulster, p. 59, appended to Johnstone's Antiq. Celto-Normanniæ, 4, Copenh. 1786.

place, and spend so solemn, and joyful, and venerable a day with them; and acquiescing in their devout request, I went out, and we sat down to the feast. But in the midst of the entertainment I said to them, 'I beseech you, brethren, let us act warily and be watchful, lest perhaps, through negligence and over-security, we be led into temptation.' But they answered:—'We beseech you, let us pass this day in joy, for it is the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ.' And I said, 'Well, let it be so.' And some time after, during the repast, as we were indulging in joyous conversation, I began again to warn them that we should be earnest in prayer and watching, and prepared against all the attacks of temptation. But they said, 'You teach us well; yea, very well; but nevertheless, since our days of fasting and prayer and watching are many, let us this day rejoice in the Lord. For the angels also, on the birth of our Lord, proclaimed good tidings of great joy to the shepherds, that should be to all the people.' [Luke ii. 10.] And I said, 'Well, let us do so.' And as we continued feasting, and were spending the day in joy, I repeated for the third time the same words of admonition, and they understood that it was not without reason that I had so purposely thus admonished them; and, greatly troubled, they said, 'Let us do as you recommend, for a great necessity lies upon us to be always girded, and to watch in spirit against the snares of the devil and all his temptations.' Now when this happened neither I nor they knew that any new temptation should assail us; but by instinct of mind only I was admonished that the state of the heart should be always defended against the sudden storms of temptation. But after they left me to return in the morning to their monastery, (that is, to Lindisfarne,) they found that a certain one of their brethren had died [that night] of the pestilence,[1] and the same disaster increased in violence every day, yea even for months, and almost for the whole year, so that nearly the whole of that noble community of spiritual fathers and brethren departed to the Lord. Wherefore, brethren, watch ye now also in prayer, in order that, should any tribulation assail you, you may be found already prepared."

§ 47. When the venerable prelate Cudberct had thus spoken, the community thought, as I said before, that he alluded to the return of the pestilence. But next day, the arrival of one who had escaped from the battle explained, by the sad announcement which he brought, the hidden meaning of the man of God's discourse. And it was ascertained that on the very day, and at the same hour, on which it was revealed to the man of God, as he was standing at the fountain,[2] king Ecgfrid had been slain by the sword of the enemy, and that the body-guard who defended him were all slain around him.

[1] Of this pestilence, which must have occurred between 676 and 685, there is no distinct trace in the historians.

[2] See § 45. The king was killed 20th May, 685, which, as Beda states, fell that year on a Saturday.

CHAP. XXVIII.[1] [A.D. 686.]—HOW HE FORETOLD HIS DECEASE TO HEREBERCT, THE ANCHORITE; AND HOW THE LATTER, THROUGH CUDBERCT'S PRAYER, OBTAINED PERMISSION TO ACCOMPANY HIM IN DEATH.

§ 48. AND not long after this, the same servant of the Lord, Cudberct, being invited to the same city of Lugubalia, arrived there in order to consecrate some priests, and at the same time to give his benediction to the queen, who was to receive the habit of holy religion from his hands. Now there was a priest of venerable life, by name Hereberct,[2] who had been for a long time united in the bonds of spiritual friendship with the man of God. This man led a solitary life, in an island[3] of the vast lake from which the river Derwent takes its source; and he was wont to come every year to receive from Cudberct the admonitions of everlasting salvation. On hearing that his friend was tarrying in the city, he joined him there, as was his custom, in the hope of being more and more inflamed to heavenly desires by his wholesome exhortations. And while these two were mutually giving each other to drink from the cup of heavenly wisdom, Cudberct said, amongst other things:—"Bethink you, brother Hereberct, of anything you may have need to ask me, and speak to me about it; for after we shall have departed the one from the other, we shall never meet again in this world, nor see each other with the eyes of the flesh. For I am assured that the time of my dissolution is not far off, and the laying aside of this my tabernacle is at hand." On hearing this, Hereberct fell at his feet, and, pouring forth tears, he said mournfully, "I beseech you by the Lord, do not leave me, but bear in mind me your companion, and beg of the mercy of heaven, that, as we have served Him on earth, we may pass together in like manner, to behold his brightness in heaven. For you know how I have always endeavoured to live by the command of your mouth, and that in whatsoever thing I have offended through ignorance or frailty, that I have in like wise striven to correct at the good pleasure of your will." The bishop bowed down in prayer, and forthwith being taught in spirit that he had obtained what he had sought from the Lord, "Rise, my brother," he said, "and weep not, but rejoice greatly, for the Divine Mercy has granted that thing which we have asked of Him." The subsequent issue of events confirmed both his promise and the truth of his prophecy: for after separating from each other, they never saw each other again in the flesh; and departing from the body at one and the same moment of time, their spirits were presently united to each other in the beatific vision, and were in like manner translated by the ministry of angels to the kingdom of heaven. But Hereberct required to be first refined by long infirmity, and this, perhaps, by the dispensation of our Lord's mercy, that the continual pain of long sickness might supply whatever deficiency of merit he might have in comparison with the blessed Cudberct; so that he being equalled in

[1] Vit. Anon. § 38; Vit. Metr. cap. xxx.
[2] See Hist. Eccl. IV. xxix. § 350.
[3] See Camd. Brit. col. 1005, 1006.

grace to his intercessor, they both might depart together at the same hour, and on one and the same day be thought worthy to be admitted to one and the like seat of everlasting blessedness.

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CHAP. XXIX.[1] [A.D. 686.]—HOW HE CURED THE WIFE OF AN EARL BY BLESSED WATER, WHICH HE SENT BY HIS PRIEST.

§ 49. Now, as he was one day going round his diocese, wherein he was bountifully distributing counsels of salvation to the rustic inhabitants of divers cottages and villages, as well as laying his hands on the lately baptized, that they might receive the grace of the Holy Ghost, he came to the mansion of a certain earl, whose wife was lying sick, as if at the point of death. And this nobleman, coming out to meet him, gave thanks to God, on his knees, for his arrival, and leading him in, welcomed him with kind hospitality. And after the usual hospitable rite of washing his hands and feet had been performed, and the prelate had sat down again, the earl began to tell him of the hopeless illness of his wife, and besought him to bless some water wherewith to sprinkle her: "For I believe," he said, "that presently, by the gift of God, she will either be restored to health, or, if she is to die, that she will pass from death to everlasting life, and, by dying, receive more speedily the recompense of her sad and long-continued trouble." The man of God readily assented to his request, and blessing some water that was brought to him, he gave it to a priest, commanding him to sprinkle the sick person with it. And entering into her bed-chamber, in which she lay like one half dead, the priest sprinkled her and her bed, and opening her mouth, he poured in a portion of the salutary draught; and, oh wondrous event, and astounding above measure! as soon as the consecrated water touched the sick woman, who was quite insensible of what had been applied to her, she was restored so completely to health, both of mind and body, that coming immediately to her perfect intellect, she blessed the Lord, and gave thanks to Him, who vouchsafed to send such and so great guests to visit and cure her. And without delay, rising up in sound health, she ministered to the ministers of her recovered health. And it was a goodly sight to behold, how she who had escaped the cup of death, by the blessing of the bishop, should be the first of all so noble a family to offer the cup of refreshment to him. Wherein she imitated the example of the mother-in-law of the apostle Peter, who, on being cured of a fever by our Lord, forthwith rising up, ministered to Him and his disciples. [Matt. viii. 14, 15.]

[1] Vit. Anon. § 32; Vit. Metr. cap. xxiii. In the former narrative several additional particulars are recorded.

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CHAP. XXX.[1] [A.D. 686.]—HOW HE CURED A DAMSEL OF PAIN IN HER HEAD AND SIDE BY ANOINTING HER WITH OIL.

§ 50. AND not unlike to this was another miraculous cure, wrought by the venerable prelate, Cudberct, as related by many witnesses who were present, among whom there was the religious priest Aediluald,[2] then the minister of the servant of God, but now abbat of the monastery of Mailros. For as Cudberct, according to his wont, was passing through the people and teaching them, he came to a certain town,[3] in which there was a small number of nuns, who through fear of a barbarian[4] army, had fled thither from their monastery, and to whom the man of God had a little time before given this place as a residence. One of these virgins, who was a kinswoman of Aediluald, the aforenamed priest, was oppressed with a grievous illness, and for a whole year had suffered from intolerable pains in her head and her whole side, so that her case was considered desperate by the physicians. When they who had come with him had informed the man of God of her case, and had besought him for her recovery, Cudberct, taking pity on her wretched state, anointed her with consecrated oil. And immediately, from that hour, she began to revive, and in a few days was restored to perfect health.

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CHAP. XXXI.[5] [A.D. 686.]—HOW A SICK MAN WAS HEALED BY BREAD WHICH HAD BEEN BLESSED BY HIM.

§ 51. NOR should we pass over in silence another miracle which we know of a certainty was wrought by the virtue of this venerable man, although in his absence. We have made mention already of Hildmer,[6] an officer whose wife had been freed from an unclean spirit by the man of God. This same officer fell afterwards into a very grievous illness, so that, his trouble increasing daily, he was confined to his bed, and appeared to be gradually reduced to the point of death. Several of his friends assembled to comfort him in his sickness ; and as they sat down by the bed on which he lay, one of them suddenly happened to mention that he had a loaf with him, which Cudberct, the man of the Lord, had lately given him, after having bestowed on it the grace of his benediction : "And I verily believe," he said, "that were Hildmer to taste of this, it would prove a remedy ; provided the slowness of our faith did not prevent it." Now they were all laymen, but devout persons. Then each turning to the other confessed that they believed without any doubt that he might be cured by the com-

[1] Vit. Anon. § 33 ; Vit. Metr. cap. xxiv.

[2] He became bishop of Lindisfarne in 724. See Eccl. Hist. § 395 ; Acta SS. mens. Feb. ii. 604.

[3] We learn from the anonymous legend that the name of this place was Bedesfeld.

[4] Possibly the army of the Picts, who had so recently killed the king of Northumbria.

[5] Vit. Metr. cap. xxv. This is an addition to the narrative of the anonymous Lindisfarne legend.

[6] Namely, in chapter xv. § 23.

munion of this blessed bread. And filling a cup with water, they put into it a little piece of that loaf, and gave it him to drink. And as soon as that taste of water, which was sanctified by the bread, reached his bowels, the pain of his inside entirely departed, and the wasting away of his outward limbs ceased; and not long after, he was restored to robust health. And the speed of so unexpected a cure deservedly stirred up the hearts not only of himself and his friends, but also of all who saw or heard of it, to praise the holiness of the servant of Christ, and to marvel at the virtue of his faith unfeigned.

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CHAP. XXXII.[1] [A.D. 686.]—HOW HE RECALLED TO LIFE, BY PRAYER, A DYING YOUTH WHO WAS BROUGHT TO HIM WHEN HE WAS ON A JOURNEY.

§ 52. ONCE, also, as this most holy pastor of the Lord's flock was going round his sheepfold, he came to a mountainous and wild district,[2] with the view of giving the imposition of hands to those who were there assembled to meet him, at a certain point, from the many hamlets which were widely scattered over the country. As, however, there was neither a church, nor any place in the mountains fitted to receive the bishop and his attendants, tents were therefore erected by the wayside; and by cutting down branches from the neighbouring forest, each man built a booth, such as he best could, for himself, wherein to abide. Here the man of God preached the Word, for two days, to the crowds that flocked to hear him, and by the imposition of hands, ministered the grace of the Holy Ghost to those who had been lately regenerated in Christ: when, lo! there suddenly appeared some women carrying on a litter a young man, wasted with a long and grievous sickness; and setting him down at the outlet of the forest, they sent to ask of the bishop leave to bring him that he might receive his blessing. And when the youth had been brought to Cudberct, and he found how grievously he was afflicted, he ordered all to withdraw to a distance. And having recourse to his wonted arms of prayer, he gave him his blessing; and forthwith the malady—which the anxious skill of physicians could not effect with their compounded drugs,—was entirely driven away. And rising up the same hour, and being refreshed with food, the youth gave thanks to God, and returned to the women who had carried him thither. And thus it came to pass that they who had carried him sorrowfully sick to Cudberct, returned home rejoicing with him, he also rejoicing in sound health, and all exulting in joy.

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CHAP. XXXIII.[3] [A.D. 686.]—HOW, IN A TIME OF MORTALITY, HE RESTORED A DYING CHILD IN SOUND HEALTH TO ITS MOTHER.

§ 53. AT the same time a pestilence having suddenly arisen in these parts, it produced so great a mortality, that in towns which had formerly been large, and in estates, and in villages once filled

[1] Vit. Anon. § 34; Vit. Metr. cap. xxvi.

[2] The anonymous legend relates this incident with some additional particulars as to persons and places.

[3] Vit. Anon. § 35; Vit. Metr. cap. xxvii.

with inhabitants, few, yea sometimes not one remained. In consequence of this, the most holy bishop with great diligence visited his diocese, and was unceasing in the ministry of the Word, and in bringing needful consolation to the scanty number of the survivors. And when he arrived at a certain village,[1] and had given the aid of exhortation to all whom he found there, he said to his priest, "Do you think that any one remains in these parts, who may require our visitation and conversation? or, having visited all who are sick, may we now pass on to others?" The priest, on looking round, saw a woman standing afar off, who, a little before, having lost one son by death, held in her arms his brother, now at the point of dying, and by the tears which furrowed her cheeks she gave proof at once of her past and present affliction. As soon as he had pointed her out to the man of God, Cudberct went towards her, and giving his blessing, he kissed the child, and said to its mother, "Fear not, neither be sad: for this your child shall recover, and live; neither shall any other of your house henceforth die of this mortal pestilence." To the truth of which prophecy, the mother herself, together with her son, who lived for a long time after, gave testimony.

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CHAP. XXXIV.[2] [A.D. 686.]—HOW HE SAW THE SOUL OF A CERTAIN PERSON TAKEN UP TO HEAVEN WHO WAS KILLED BY FALLING FROM A TREE.

§ 54. MEANWHILE, as Cudberct, the man of God, was conscious beforehand of his own approaching death, he now resolved in his mind to lay down the care of his pastoral office, and to return to a solitary life: there to shake off all external solicitude, and to await, amid the free employment of prayer and psalmody, the day of his death, or rather of his life in heaven. Nevertheless, he desired first to make a complete visitation, not only of his diocese, but also of all the other dwellings of the faithful, in order to confirm all with the needful word of exhortation; and having done so, to return to be refreshed in the joy of his long-desired solitude. Whilst he was thus engaged, being invited by the most noble and most holy virgin of Christ, the abbess Aelflaede, (whom I have mentioned above,[3]) he came to the property of her monastery,[4] for the purpose of there seeing her and talking with her, and for dedicating a church; for the estate contained no inconsiderable number of the servants of Christ. And as they sat at table at the hour of refection, Cudberct suddenly turned away his mind from the carnal feast to the contemplation of spiritual things. The limbs of his body were loosed from their functions, the colour of his face changed, his eyes were unusually astounded, and the knife which he held in his hand dropped on the table. And when his priest, who was standing by and ministering, saw this, leaning towards the abbess, he said softly, "Ask the bishop what he has just now seen;

[1] Here again Beda has omitted details which are valuable.
[2] Vit. Anon. § 39; Vit. Metr. cap. xxxi.
[3] See chapters xxiii. and xxiv. § 38—41.
[4] The Lindisfarne monk furnishes us with the name of the monastery; it was called Osingadun.

for I know that not without cause his trembling hand has dropped the knife, and his countenance is changed: for he sees something spiritual, which the rest of us cannot see." And immediately turning towards him, "I beseech you," she said, "my lord bishop, tell me what you have seen just now; for not without cause has your wearied hand dropped the knife which it was holding." Cudberct, however, endeavoured to dissemble that he had seen anything secret, and answered playfully, "Do you think that I am able to eat the whole day? surely I ought to rest a little while now." But as she urgently adjured and besought him to reveal the vision, "I have seen," he replied, "the soul of a certain holy person borne up by the hands of angels to the joys of the kingdom of heaven." Again she said, "From what place was he taken?" He replied, "From your monastery;" and on her proceeding to ask the name of the person, he said, "To-morrow, when I am celebrating mass, you yourself shall tell me his name." On hearing this, she forthwith sent to her greater monastery, to see who had been lately snatched away from the body. But the messenger, finding all safe and well there, set out next morning to return to his mistress, and on the road he met some persons who were carrying in a cart the body of a deceased brother to be buried; and asking who it was, he was told, that it was one of the shepherds, a man of good life, who incautiously climbing a tree, had fallen down, and was so much injured that he expired at the very time on which the man of God had seen him borne up to heaven. And returning, he related to the abbess what had happened, and she immediately went to the bishop, who was then dedicating the church, and with womanlike astonishment, as if about to relate some extraordinary circumstance, "I pray you," she said, "my lord bishop, remember during mass the soul of my servant Haduuald," for that was the man's name, "who died yesterday, by falling from a tree." Then it appeared manifestly to all how mightily the manifold spirit of prophecy was present in the heart of the holy man, since he could not only see as present the secret departure of the man's soul, but could also foretell that this fact should afterwards be communicated to himself by others.

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### CHAP. XXXV.[1] [A.D. 686.]—HOW BY TASTING WATER HE GAVE IT THE FLAVOUR OF WINE.

§ 55. AFTER this, having completed his visitation of the mountainous districts in order, he came to the monastery of virgins which, as we noticed above,[2] was situated not far from the mouth of the river Tyne, where he was honourably received by the religious and (according to the estimation of the world) the most noble servant of Christ, the abbess Uerca. And after they had

[1] This narrative does not occur either in the anonymous legend or in Beda's own metrical narrative. He tells us, towards the end of the chapter, whence he obtained his information.

[2] Namely in chapter iii. § 6.

risen from the noonday rest, Cudberct, feeling thirsty, asked for something to drink. They accordingly asked him what he would have to drink? whether they should bring him wine or beer? "Give me water," he said; and they offered him water which they had drawn from the fountain. And having given his benediction and drank a little, he handed it to his priest, who was standing beside him, and he gave it back to the attendant. And having taken the cup, the attendant said:—"May I be permitted to drink of the draught of which the bishop has drank?" To which the other replied:—"Yea, why may you not?" Now, this man was the priest of the monastery. He drank accordingly, but the water seemed to him to have acquired the flavour of wine; and wishing that a brother who was standing by should be likewise a witness of so great a miracle, he handed him the cup; and when he also had drank of it, the water seemed to his palate also to have acquired the flavour of wine. Now as they looked on one another marvelling, when they found a convenient pause in the conversation, they mutually agreed that, as it seemed to them, they had never tasted better wine; as one of them who afterwards dwelt for no short time in our monastery at the mouth of the river Wear, and who is now buried there in peaceful rest, testified to me with his own mouth.

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### Chap. XXXVI.[1] [A.D. 687.]—How a tempestuous Sea kept several Monks prisoners, who were disobedient to him.

§ 56. Having spent two years[2] in the government of his diocese, Cudberct, the man of the Lord, knowing in spirit that the day of his departure was at hand, threw off the burthen of the pastoral office, and returned as soon as possible to the strife of a hermit's life, which he loved so well, in order that the flame of his former contrition might more freely consume the thorns of worldly care which had grown up within him. At this time it was his custom more frequently to leave his abode, and converse face to face with the brethren who came to visit him. I will now relate a miracle wrought by him at that time, from which it will more clearly appear how necessary a thing it is to obey holy men, even in those things which they appear somewhat negligently to have commanded. One day, several persons having come to visit him, Cudberct went out to them, and having refreshed them with words of exhortation, he concluded his admonition by saying, "It is now time for me to return to my cell; but as you are disposed to set out, do you first take some food; take this goose, and cook and eat it," (for the goose was hanging against the wall,) "and so, in the name of the Lord, go on board and return home." Having thus spoken, he prayed, and giving his blessing, he returned to his

[1] Vit. Anon. § 40; Vit. Metr. cap. xxxii. In neither of these narratives does the incident occur which recounts the punishment of the monks of Lindisfarne. Beda quotes his authority for it at the end of the chapter.

[2] These two years are to be calculated from his nomination, not from his consecration. See Pagi, ad an. 687, § 5.

cell. The others, as they were commanded, took some refreshment; but as they had abundance of other food which they had brought with them, they did not care to touch the goose as he had bidden them.

§ 57. And after they were refreshed with food, and were preparing to go on board their boat, there suddenly arose a wild tempest, which totally prevented them from putting to sea. And it came to pass that for seven days they remained sorrowfully shut up in the island by the boiling waves; and nevertheless, they called not to mind the fault of their disobedience, for which they were suffering this imprisonment. And when they frequently returned to converse with their father, and complained of their return being so long delayed, they received from him counsels of patience; and at length, on the seventh day, he went out to them with the intention of soothing their sadness by the grace of his visit and consolation. And when he entered the house where they tarried, and saw that the goose had not been eaten, with a placid countenance and rather joyous speech he reproved their disobedience, saying,— "Is this the goose still hanging there uneaten? and what marvel is it that the sea does not suffer you to depart? Put it forthwith into the cauldron; cook it and eat it, that the sea may be at rest, and you may return home."

§ 58. They immediately did as he bade them; and it happened most marvellously that as soon as the goose that was to be cooked according to the command of the man of God began to boil in the cauldron by the action of the fire, at the same time the waters of the sea, by the lulling of the winds, began also to cease from their boiling. Having therefore finished their meal, seeing the sea placid, they went on board their ship, and with favouring breezes, returned home with joy, but at the same time with shame; for they were ashamed of their disobedience and over-slowness of comprehension, whereby they were kept back from acknowledging their fault and correcting it, notwithstanding the chastisement of their Maker. And on the other hand they rejoiced, because they understood that God had so great care of his faithful servant, that he punished those who lightly esteemed him, even by means of the elements. They rejoiced, because they saw that their Creator had so much care of them, that He corrected their errors even by a manifest miracle. Now, I did not learn this miracle from any vague authority; but I had it from the narrative of one of those who were present. I allude to Cynemund, a monk of venerable life, and a priest of the same monastery, one known at this present time to very many of the faithful, and as celebrated for the grace of a good life as for his length of days.

CHAP. XXXVII.[1] [A.D. 687.]—HOW GREAT TEMPTATIONS HE EXPERIENCED DURING HIS SICKNESS, AND WHAT HE COMMANDED RESPECTING HIS BURIAL.

§ 59. Now Cudberct, the man of God, returned to his cell and his island, shortly after the solemn day of our Lord's nativity. And as a crowd of the brethren stood around him as he was going aboard, one of them, a long-tried monk of venerable life, strong indeed in faith, but now become weak in body from the disease of dysentery, asked him: "Tell us, lord bishop, when we may hope for your return." And Cudberct, who knew the truth, answered his simple question as simply, saying:—"When you shall bring my body hither." After he had passed nearly two months, greatly exulting in the repose which he had regained, wherein he was enabled to curb his body and mind with the rigour of wonted restraint, he was seized with a sudden illness, and by the fire of temporal pain he began to be prepared for the joys of everlasting happiness. I will describe his death in the words of him from whom I learned it; of Herefrid, namely, a devout and religious priest, who at that time presided over the monastery of Lindisfarne as abbot.

§ 60. "After three weeks of continued wasting infirmity, Cudberct came to his end thus:—He began to be taken ill on the fourth[2] day of the week, and in like manner on the fourth day of the week, his sickness having been accomplished, he departed to the Lord. And when I came on the first morning after he was taken ill, (for I had gone to the island with the brethren three days before,) through a desire to receive from him the comfort of his wonted benediction and exhortation, and having intimated by the usual signal that I had arrived, he came to the window, and only returned a sigh in answer to my greeting. Whereupon I said, 'What is the matter, my lord bishop? Have you been seized with illness during the night?' And he said, 'Yes, sickness has stricken me this night.' Now I was thinking of his old infirmity, namely, an almost daily trouble wherewith he was wasted, and I did not suppose that he spoke of a new and unusual attack. And without asking any more questions, 'Give us,' I said, 'your blessing, for it is time for us to go on board, and to return home.' 'Do as you say,' he said, 'go on board and return home safe; and when God shall have taken my soul, bury me in this cell, at the south side of my oratory, opposite the east side of the Holy Cross[3] which I have erected there. Now there is at the north of the same oratory a [stone] coffin, hidden by sods, which formerly the venerable abbat Cudda presented to me. Place my body in that,

[1] Compare Vit. Metr. cap. xxxiv.

[2] Namely, on February 27, 687. See Pagi, ad an. § 5.

[3] This passage shows that Cudberct was anxious that he should be buried with his face looking towards the east, concerning which custom see Martene, De Antiq. Eccl. Ritibus, ii. 347, ed. fol. What St. Cuthbert says respecting the cross near his tomb will be best illustrated by the following extract from Durand's Rationale Div. Offic. VII. xxxv. § 39:—"Et in quocunque loco extra cœmeterium Christianus sepeliatur, semper crux capiti illius apponi debet, ad notandum illum Christianum fuisse . . .

and wrap it in the fine linen[1] which you will find there. I would not indeed be clothed in it while living, but for the love of the God-beloved woman who sent it to me, the abbess Uerca[2] to wit, I have taken care to preserve it to wrap my body.' Hearing this, 'I beseech you, father,' I said, 'since I hear that you are sick and about to die, permit some of the brethren to remain and minister to you.' But he said, 'Go now, but return at a suitable time.' And though I pressed him more earnestly to accept our service, I was unable to obtain my request. At last I asked him when we might return, and he said, 'When God shall please, and He shall show you.' We accordingly departed as he had commanded, and having called together all the monks into the church, I ordered prayers to be made without intermission for him, saying that it seemed to me from some of his words, that the day was drawing near on which he was to depart to God.

§ 61. "Now on account of his illness, I was very anxious to go back to him, but for five days a tempest opposed my wishes, so that we could not return, and the issue of the event showed that what happened was done by God. For as Almighty God would chastise his servant, in order thoroughly to cleanse him from all stain of worldly frailty, and to show his adversaries that nothing could prevail against the fortitude of his faith, He was pleased to separate him for so long a time from man, and to prove and refine him by pain of the flesh, and a sharper struggle with the old enemy. But when calm weather had returned, we went back to the island, where we found that he had gone out of his monastery, and that he was sitting in the house in which we were accustomed to reside. And as a certain urgent matter constrained the other monks, who accompanied me, to sail back to the opposite shore, I myself resolved to remain on the island, and to minister to our father's immediate wants. Wherefore, warming some water, I washed his foot, which, on account of a long-continued swelling, had an ulcer, from which matter issued, and consequently required attention; and also warming some wine, I brought it, and asked him to taste it; for I saw by his countenance that he was entirely worn out both with want and sickness. Having finished tending him, he laid himself quietly on his bed, and I sat down beside him.

§ 62. "And as he was silent, I said, 'I see, my lord bishop, that you have been troubled with much infirmity since we left you; and we think it strange that you would not, when we departed, suffer us to leave some one to wait on you.' But he said, 'This happened by the providence and will of God, that, destitute of the presence and help of man, I should suffer some adversity; for after you were gone away from me, immediately my disease began to press heavily upon me: and so going out from my cell, I came here, that whosoever of you should come to minister to me, should find me here, and have no need to enter my cell.

[1] A mass of curious information respecting this custom may be seen in the treatise of J. E. Franzenius, De Funeribus Veterum Christianorum, p. 85, ed. Helm. 1709; as also in Martene, De Antiq. Monachorum Ritibus, V. x. § 92.

[2] See chap. xxxv § 55.

Now from the time I came in here, I have never moved hence, nor changed the position of my limbs, but have remained quietly where I am for these five days and nights.' Whereupon I said, 'And how, my lord bishop, could you live thus? Have you remained here without taking food for so long a time?' Whereupon, lifting up the covering of his bed, on which he was sitting, he showed me five onions concealed therein, and said, 'This has been my food during these days: for whensoever my mouth burned with intolerable dryness or thirst, by tasting these, I refreshed and recruited myself.' (One of these onions appeared to have been a little eaten; less, however, than one-half of it.) 'And over and above,' he continued, 'never have my enemies, during all the time I have abode in this island, assailed me with so many persecutions, as during these five days.' I did not dare to ask what these temptations were, of which he spoke: I only asked him to allow some of us to wait upon him. To this he assented, and retained several of our monks, among whom there was the elder Baeda, the priest, who had always been accustomed to render him the most familiar service. And as he was most intimately acquainted with all that he had received as gifts or loans, Cudberct on this account wished him especially to remain with him, that in case he should neglect to make a becoming return for any presents which he had received, Baeda might remind him of his neglect, and restore his own property to each before Cudberct died. And also he specially named a certain other person from among the brethren, whom he wished to remain with the others in attendance upon himself; one, to wit, who was grievously afflicted by a long-continued diarrhœa, which had baffled the skill of the physicians. He was a man noted for religion, prudence, and gravity, and well deserving to be a witness of the last words which the man of God uttered, and in what manner he departed to the Lord.

§ 63. "Meanwhile returning home, I told the brethren that our venerable father had given orders that he should be buried in his own island. 'But it seems to me,' I said, 'that it would be more just and meet for us to ask him to permit his body to be translated hither, and to be deposited in the church with suitable honour.' What I said was approved by all, and, coming to the bishop, we asked him, saying, 'We dare not, lord bishop, despise your command, wherein you have given orders to be buried here; nevertheless, it seems good to us to ask permission to transfer your body, so that we may be allowed to have you to remain among us.' But he said, 'It was my wish to rest in the body here, where I have fought my little wrestling (such as it was) for the Lord, and where I desire to finish my course, and whence I hope to be raised up by the merciful Judge to a crown of righteousness. Moreover, I think it would be more advantageous to you that I should rest here, on account of the trouble you shall have from fugitives and evil doers, who will probably fly for refuge to my tomb;[1] for what-

[1] This anticipation was fully verified, for the privilege of sanctuary was claimed in right of the body of St. Cudberct, and it existed at Durham until the Suppression. The Surtees Society, among its other important contributions to the history of

soever I am in myself, I know that the report shall go abroad of me, that I am a servant of Christ, and you will necessarily have very often to intercede for such persons with the powerful of the world, and so to undergo much labour and trouble from the possession of my body.' But on our beseeching him much and long, and assuring him that labour of this kind would be both light and agreeable, after taking counsel with himself, the man of the Lord replied, 'If you would really overcome what I had disposed, and should bear my body from this place, it seems to me that it would be better, in this case, to bury me inside your church,[1] so that you may visit my tomb whenever you please, and have it in your power to admit, or not to admit, those that come thither.' We thanked him for his permission and counsel; we knelt down; and returning home, from that time forth we did not cease to visit him frequently.

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CHAP. XXXVIII.[2] [A.D. 687.]—HOW HE CURED OF DIARRHŒA THE MONK WHO WAITED UPON HIM.

§ 64. "AND when, his sickness continuing, he saw that the time of his dissolution was at hand, he commanded that he should be carried back to his little cell and oratory: now it was at the third hour of the day. There we accordingly carried him; for through his exceeding weakness he was unable to walk. But when we came to the door, we begged him to allow some one of us to enter along with him and minister to him, for no one but himself, for many years, had ever entered therein. And, looking round, he perceived the brother who, as I mentioned before,[3] was ill of a flux, and he said: 'Let Uualhstod enter along with me;' for that was the brother's name. Uualhstod accordingly remained with him within, until the ninth hour, and going out, he called me, saying: 'The bishop commands you to come in to him. Moreover, I can tell you a new and very marvellous circumstance that has happened to me, for from the time that I went in thither, and touched the bishop, to lead him to the oratory, I forthwith felt that I was freed from all the trouble of my long infirmity.' Now, it is not to be doubted that this was procured by the dispensation of heavenly mercy; that he who before, when in sound health and strength, had cured many, should now also, when about to die, cure this monk; in order to manifest by such a sign, that the holy man, even when sick in body, was of perfect health of soul. In which cure,[4] truly, he followed the example of the most holy and reverend father and bishop, Aurelius Augustine, of whom we read that when he was weighed down with the infirmity of which he died, a sick man was

Northumbria, has printed from ancient MSS. a record of the persons who availed themselves of the security afforded by this privilege.

[1] A custom at that time by no means general. See Franzenius De Funeribus Vett. Christ. iv. 11, § 2.

[2] Vit. Anon. § 41; Vit. Metr. cap. xxxv.

[3] Namely, in the preceding chapter, § 59.

[4] This illustration is borrowed from the Life of St. Augustine by Possidius, cap. xxix. Opp. S. August. i. p. viii. ed. fol. Lugd. 1664.

conveyed into his chamber, who besought him to lay his hands upon him, that thereby he might be healed. But he said, 'If I could do anything in these matters, I would, first of all, do something for myself.' And the sick man replied, 'I am commanded to visit you; and verily I have heard these words in my sleep: Go to bishop Augustine, that he may lay his hands upon you, and you shall be healed.' On hearing this, Augustine presently laid his hand upon the sick man, and gave him his blessing; and forthwith he dismissed him, cured, to his own house."

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CHAP. XXXIX.[1] [A.D. 687.]—WHAT WERE THE LAST COMMANDS WHICH HE GAVE TO THE BRETHREN, AND HOW, AFTER RECEIVING THE VIATICUM, HE YIELDED UP HIS SPIRIT AMID WORDS OF PRAYER.

§ 65. "Now, I went in to him," he said, "about the ninth[2] hour of the day, and I found him reclining in a corner of his oratory, opposite the altar; and I myself began to sit down, but he did not speak much, for the burthen of his infirmity prevented him from speaking with ease. But on my pressingly asking him to leave some words which might be considered as a bequest and as a last farewell to the brethren, he began to speak a few words, but they were powerful, concerning peace and humility, and cautioning us against those persons that chose rather to wrestle against such things than to take delight therein. 'Keep peace,' he said, 'one with another, and heavenly charity; and when necessity demands of you to hold counsel as to your state, take great care that you be of one mind in your conclusions; and moreover, maintain mutual concord with other servants of Christ, and despise not the household of the faith, who come to you, seeking hospitality, but be careful to receive such persons, to entertain them, and send them away with friendly kindness; and do not think that you are better than other followers of the same faith and conversation. But with those that err from the unity of catholic peace, either by not celebrating Easter at the proper time, or by living perversely, have no communion. And know and hold in memory, that if necessity should compel you to choose one of two evils, I would much rather that you should dig up my bones from the tomb, and carrying them away with you, desert these parts, and dwell wheresoever God may provide—much rather, I say, than that by giving any consent to the iniquities of schismatics, you should submit your neck to their yoke. Strive, then, most diligently to learn and to observe the catholic statutes of the fathers; practise also with great solicitude those rules of regular life, which, by my ministry, the divine mercy hath vouchsafed to give to you. For I know, that although I have lived contemptible to some, nevertheless, after my departure, you shall see more openly what I have been, and how that the doctrine which I have taught is not to be despised.'

§ 66. "These and the like words the man of God spoke at inter-

[1] Vit. Metr. cap. xxxvi.

[2] Namely, about three o'clock in the afternoon.

vals; for as we have said, the greatness of his infirmity deprived him of the power of much speaking. Thus he spent a quiet day, till evening, in the expectation of future blessedness; yea, and tranquilly continued the wakeful night also in prayer. Now,[1] when the wonted time of nocturn prayers was come, after having received the salutary sacraments at my hands, he fortified his departure, which he knew had now come, by the communion of the Body and Blood of our Lord; and having lifted up his eyes to heaven, and extended his hands on high, his soul, intent on heavenly praises, departed to the joys of the kingdom of heaven.

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CHAP. XL.[2] [A.D. 687.]—HOW, ACCORDING TO THE PROPHECY OF THE PSALM WHICH THE MONKS OF LINDISFARNE WERE SINGING AT THE MOMENT OF HIS DEATH, THEY WERE ATTACKED, BUT BY THE HELP OF THE LORD AGAIN PROTECTED.

§ 67. "And, going out immediately, I announced his death to the brethren, who had in like manner passed the night in watching and prayer; and so it happened that in the order of nocturnal lauds, they were at that time chaunting the fifty-ninth Psalm,[3] which begins, 'Deus repulisti nos, et destruxisti nos: iratus es, et misertus es nobis.' 'O God, thou hast cast us off, and hast destroyed us: thou hast been angry, and hast had mercy upon us.' And forthwith one of them ran and lighted two candles, and holding one in each hand, he went up to a higher place, to show to the brethren who remained in the monastery of Lindisfarne, that the holy soul of Cudberct had now departed to the Lord; for such was the signal agreed upon among them to notify his most holy death. And when the monk who was intently watching afar off, on the opposite watch-tower of the island of Lindisfarne, saw this, for which he had been waiting, he ran quickly to the church, where the whole congregation of the monks were assembled to celebrate the solemnities of nocturnal psalmody; and it happened that they also, when he entered, were singing the before-named Psalm. The result showed that this occurrence had been directed by heavenly dispensation. For in truth, after the man of God was buried, so violent a storm of temptation[4] shook that church, that several of the brethren chose rather to depart from the place than to encounter such dangers.

§ 68. "Nevertheless the year after, Eadberct was ordained to the

[1] See Vit. Anon. § 42.

[2] Vit. Metr. cap. xxxvii.

[3] The sixtieth according to our enumeration. This same psalm still forms one of the number used in the evening service of the fourth day of the week, according to the Roman ritual.

[4] The Bollandists imagine that the obscure terms in which Beda speaks of the trials and temptations to which the monks of Lindisfarne were exposed immediately after the death of Cudberct, have reference to the attempt then made by Wilfrid of York to introduce the rule of St. Benedict, instead of the "instituta vitæ regularis," which they had been admonished by their dying bishop to retain. (See § 65, above.) Mabillon, the historian of the Benedictines, is strongly opposed to this theory, as militating against his own order, and he pronounces it to be uncertain and untenable. (Acta SS. Ord. S. Bened. ii. 873.) But he advances no arguments against it.

bishopric,[1] and as he was a man noted for his great virtues and deep learning in the Scriptures, and above all given to works of alms-deeds, he put to flight the tempest of disturbance which had arisen; and to speak in the words of Scripture, 'The Lord builded up Jerusalem, (that is, the vision of peace,) and gathered together the dispersed of Israel. He healed the contrite of heart, and bound up their bruises.' [Psl. cxlvi. 2, 3.] So that the meaning of the Psalm which was sung when the death of the blessed man was announced, was clearly understood: namely, how that after his decease his citizens should be cast off and destroyed; but that after the manifestation of the threatened anger of the Lord they should be forthwith cherished again by heavenly mercy.[2] Moreover, whosoever peruses the rest of the Psalm with attention may easily perceive how well it agrees with the same sense.

"Now we brought back the body of our venerable father in a boat to the island of Lindisfarne, and it was received by a great multitude of people who met it, together with choirs of choristers, and it was deposited in a stone coffin in the church of the blessed apostle Peter, on the right side of the altar."

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CHAP. XLI.[3] [A.D. 687.]—HOW A BOY POSSESSED BY AN EVIL SPIRIT WAS CURED BY SOME MOULD, ON WHICH THE WATER THAT WASHED HIS BODY HAD BEEN POURED, BEING PUT INTO WATER.

§ 69. BUT neither did the miraculous cures which the servant of Christ exerted when living cease, even after he was dead and buried. For it happened that a certain boy in the neighbourhood of Lindisfarne was vexed by a most cruel spirit, so that the sense of reason being totally lost, he howled and strove to destroy everything within his reach, yea, even to bite his own limbs. A priest had been sent from our monastery to the possessed; one, namely, who had been accustomed to put to flight unclean spirits by the grace of exorcism. However, he could do no good whatever to this possessed person. Wherefore he counselled his father to take the boy in a cart to the monastery, and pray to the Lord for him at the relics of the blessed martyrs[4] which are there. The father did as he was counselled to do. But the holy martyrs of God would not work the cure which he sought, in order to show how great was the place which Cudberct held amongst them. Meanwhile, as the howling of the demoniac, his groans, and the gnashing of his teeth, were striking the greatest horror in all that saw and heard him, and no one could devise any remedy, behold! one of the priests, taught in the spirit that he might be cured by the assistance of the blessed father Cudberct, went privately to the place where he knew that the

[1] Beda tells us (Eccl. Hist. IV. xxix. § 352) that the diocese of Lindisfarne during this period was ruled by bishop Wilfrid.

[2] A further allusion to the persecution which the monks of Lindisfarne had experienced, and their escape from it.

[3] Vit. Anon. § 44; Vit. Metr. cap. xl.

[4] Possibly a portion of those relics of the martyrs which Benedict Biscop had brought into England a few years previously, and distributed among the neighbouring churches. See his Life, by Beda, § 6, p. 607 of this volume.

water had been poured, wherewith his dead body had been washed, and taking thence a little portion of the mould, he put it into water, and carrying this to the sufferer, he poured it into his gaping mouth as he was uttering horrible, direful, and lamentable sounds. But as soon as the water touched him, he shut his mouth, he closed his eyes, which before were staring, bloodshot, and furious, and his head and his whole body sank into quiet repose. Thus he passed the night in placid rest, and waking in the morning from sleep, as well as from frenzy, he knew that he was freed from the devil that vexed him by the merits and intercession of the blessed Cudberct. It was a marvellous and delightful spectacle to all good men to behold the lad restored to sound health, going round the holy places in company with his father; and to see one who the day before, through estrangement of mind, could not tell either who he was, or where he was, now in perfect soundness of mind giving thanks for the assistance of the saints. And as the whole community of the brethren who were standing by saw and congratulated him, he gave praise before the relics of the martyrs on bended knees to the Lord God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; and being now delivered from the stripes of the enemy, and more strengthened in faith than ever, he returned to his own home. There is shown to this day the very pit into which this memorable water was poured; it is in the form of a square, in every part surrounded by wood, and filled with pebbles. It is situated near the church in which the body of Cudberct reposes, to the south. And it came to pass from that time that many cures, by the Lord's permission, were wrought by these same pebbles, or with some of the mould.

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### Chap. XLII.[1] [A.D. 698.] — How his Body was found uncorrupted eleven years afterwards.

§ 70. Now it pleased the divine dispensation to manifest more extensively the great glory in which this holy man lived after death, whose life was even before death so sublimely attested by numerous miracles; for after eleven years[2] had passed away since his interment, the same divine power put it into the hearts of the brethren to raise up his bones, which they expected to have found dry, (as is usual with the dead when the rest of the body has been consumed and reduced to dust,) in order that they might inclose his remains in a light chest;[3] and they intended for the sake of decent veneration to deposit these in the same place, but above (instead of below) the pavement. When they expressed this their desire to Eadberct their bishop, about mid-lent, he assented to their proposal, and commanded that they should remember to do this on the day of his deposition, which occurred on the thirteenth of the kalends of April [20th March]. This they accordingly did;

[1] Vit. Anon. § 43; Vit. Metr. cap. xxxviii.; see also Eccl. Hist. IV. xxx. § 353.

[2] Therefore in the year 698.

[3] The corresponding narrative in the Eccl. Hist. § 353, says that their intention was to place him in a new shrine ("in novo loculo").

but on opening the sepulchre they found his whole body as entire as when he was yet living, and more like one in a sound sleep (for the joints of the limbs were flexible) than one who was dead. All the vestments,[1] moreover, with which he had been clothed, were not only unsoiled, but even appeared in all their former freshness and were of marvellous brightness. And when the monks saw this they were presently struck with exceeding fear and trembling, so that they could scarcely speak a word: they hardly dared to look upon the miracle which lay before them; scarcely did they know what to do.

§ 71. And lifting up the end of the garments to give proof of the incorruption of the body, (for they absolutely feared to touch that which was next his flesh,) they hurried away to acquaint the bishop with what they had discovered, for at this time he happened to be dwelling as a solitary in a place remote from the monastery, girt on all sides by the flowing waves of the sea, where he was always wont to spend the whole of Lent, as well as the forty days before our Lord's nativity, in great devotion, abstinence, prayer, and tears. Here also his venerable predecessor Cudberct, before he went to Farne, as we related above,[2] wrestled for some time in secret for the Lord. They also brought to him a portion of the vestments in which his holy body had been wrapped. These tokens the bishop gratefully received; he greatly rejoiced to hear of the miracle, and with marvellous affection he kissed the wrappings as if they yet surrounded the body of the father, "Gird," he said, "his body with fresh wrappings, instead of these which you have removed, and so place him in the chest you had prepared. For I know most assuredly that the place which has been consecrated by so great a miracle from heaven shall not long remain vacant, and blessed exceedingly is he, to whom the Lord, the author and giver of all true blessedness, shall vouchsafe to grant a place of rest therein." And he added, in his wonder, what I once composed in verse, and said:—

§ 72. "Who can express the noble acts of the Lord?
Or who can comprehend the riches of Paradise?
While God, in his mercy, breaking the bonds of death,
Hath granted to him perpetual life in heaven.
He hath adorn'd his lifeless limbs with honour,
Giving fair pledges of perpetual wealth.
How blessed the abode which Thou hast prepared for him—
Which Thou hast made to shine, joyful in light.
Easy it is for Thee to command that under the turf
Gnawing corruption shall not devour his remains.
O Thou who for three days didst preserve the prophet Jonah,
Opening a way of life out of the jaws of death!
O Thou who in the flames didst defend the Hebrew children,
Lest the Chaldean fire should tarnish the beauty of Israel!
O Thou who for forty years didst renew thy people's raiment,
Whilst through the pathless desert they trod an unknown road!
O Thou who into members formest the dust and ashes,
When at the trump of the angel the world shall shake on its axis!"

[1] For a minute and most interesting account of the vestments and other relics which were found in the tomb of St. Cudberct on this and subsequent occasions, see the work of the Rev. James Raine, to which reference has already been made at § 13 of the Preface.

[2] See § 29.

When the bishop had ended such words as these, and more than these, accompanied with copious tears, with great compunction and with faltering tongue the monks did as they were commanded; and the body having been wrapped in new raiment and laid in a light chest, they deposited it upon the pavement of the sanctuary.

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CHAP. XLIII.[1] [A.D. 698.]—HOW IN DEPOSITING THE BODY OF EADBERCT THE BISHOP IN THE GRAVE OF THE MAN OF GOD, THE MONKS PLACED IT OVER THE BODY OF CUDBERCT.

§ 73. MEANWHILE the God-beloved bishop[2] Eadberct was seized with a severe illness, and the intensity of the malady increasing daily, and growing worse and worse, not long after, that is, on the day before the nones of May [6th May], he also departed to the Lord, having obtained the favour from Him, which he had most earnestly sought, namely to pass out of the body, not by a sudden death, but refined by a long sickness. And in depositing his body in the tomb of the blessed father Cudberct, they placed it over the chest, in which they had deposited the uncorrupted members of the same father; where even now, when the faith of those that ask exact it, miraculous signs cease not to be manifested. Yea, also the vestments which had clothed his most holy body, either in life or in death, possess in like manner the grace of healing.

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CHAP. XLIV.[3] [A.D. 698.]—HOW A SICK MAN WAS CURED BY PRAYING AT HIS TOMB.

§ 74. LASTLY, a certain clerk of the most reverend and most holy Uuilbrord[4]—Clement, bishop of the nation of the Frisians, who had come from the parts beyond the sea, whilst he was staying there for some days as a guest, was taken with a very grievous malady, which by continually increasing for a long time, reduced him to a very hopeless condition. And when he was so overpowered by suffering, that he appeared to himself to be as it were suspended between life and death, a wholesome thought occurred to him, and he said to his attendant, "I pray you, conduct me this very day, after the celebration of mass, to pray at the body of the most holy man of God." (Now it was the Lord's day.) "For I hope, by the grace of his intercession, to be delivered from these torments, so that I may either return cured to this present life, or may come, when dead, to that which is everlasting." The other did as he had been requested, and led him, but with difficulty, leaning on a staff, into the church. And when he came to the tomb of the most holy and God-beloved father, he knelt down, and bowing his head to the ground, besought his cure. And no

[1] Vit. Metr. cap. xxxix.
[2] See Acta SS. mens. Maii, ii. 107; also Eccl. Hist. § 354.
[3] Vit. Metr. cap. xli.; Vit. Anon. § 45.
[4] The biography of this eminent missionary will be given in another volume of our collection.

sooner had he done this, than he perceived that his body had acquired so much strength from Cudberct's uncorrupted body, that he rose up with ease from prayer; and without the assistance either of his attendant to lead him, or a staff to support him, he returned to the hospice. And after a few days, his strength being entirely restored, he proceeded on the way which he had proposed.

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### Chap. XLV.[1] [A.D. 698.]—How a Man afflicted with the Palsy was cured by his Shoes.

§ 75. There was in a monastery at no great distance, a young man who had lost the use of all his limbs, by that disease which the Greeks call *paralysis;* and as the abbot thereof knew that there were most skilful physicians in the monastery of Lindisfarne, he sent him thither, begging, that if anything could be done for him, they would undertake his cure. But notwithstanding the utmost attention paid to him by the command of their bishop and abbot, although they expended upon him the whole of their medical skill, his complaint entirely baffled them; yea rather, the disease increased daily, so that, with the exception of the mouth, his whole body was deprived of the power of motion. And as he lay despaired of, and deserted by the physicians of the body, who laboured long and in vain, he fled for refuge to the heavenly Physician, who when truly entreated looks with mercy upon all our iniquities, and heals all our sicknesses. The sick man accordingly besought his attendant to bring to him a portion of the incorruptible relics of the holy body, for he believed that by its virtue, and the bounty of the Lord, he should thereby be restored to the grace of health. And having consulted the abbot, he took the shoes,[2] which had covered the feet of the man of God, in the tomb, and put them on the paralysed feet of the sick man; for the malady had first attacked him in the feet. Now he did this at the beginning of the night, at the usual time of going to rest, and immediately he fell into a placid sleep, and as the silence of the deep night advanced, he began to move his feet alternately, as the attendants who watched, and saw him, plainly perceived. And as the virtue of healing that was bestowed through the relics of the holy man advanced, the soundness he had prayed for continued to pass from the sole of the feet through the rest of his limbs. And when the wonted signal[3] in the monastery for nocturnal prayer was sounded, the man awoke from sleep and sat up, and forthwith his nerves and all the joints of his body, being strengthened by internal virtue, and the pain being removed, perceiving that he was cured, he also rose up, and passed the whole time of the nocturnal

[1] Vit. Metr. cap. xliii.; Vit. Anon. § 46.

[2] It will be remembered that it was the custom to bury the dead body in the dress which the deceased had worn while living. See Martene, De Antiq. Monach. Ritibus, V. x. § 87.

[3] On the different modes adopted for arousing the monks, see the work quoted in the last note, I. i. § 13.

psalmody, or matins, standing, and giving thanks to the Lord. And when morning was now come, he proceeded to the church; where, all seeing and congratulating him, he went round all the holy places, praying and offering the sacrifice of praise to his Saviour. And it came to pass, by a most beautiful turn of events, that he who was borne thither in a carriage, with his whole body paralysed, returned home from that place in sound health, with all his limbs compact and strengthened. Hence it is delightful to call to mind "that this is the change of the right hand of the Most High," [Psal. lxxvi. 11, Vulg.,] whose wonders from the foundation of the world are to be had in remembrance, and cease not to shine forth.

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CHAP. XLVI.[1] [A.D. 699.]—HOW FELGELD, THE ANCHORITE, WAS CLEANSED FROM A TUMOUR IN HIS FACE BY A PARTICLE OF HIS WALL.

§ 76. Nor do I think that another heavenly miracle should be passed over, which the divine mercy accomplished even by the remains of the most holy oratory, in which the venerable solitary had been wont to combat for the Lord. Whether, however, this miracle is to be ascribed to the merits of the same blessed father Cudberct, or of his successor Aediluuald, a man equally devoted to God, the Judge of hearts knoweth. Nor does any reason forbid that it might be attributed to the united merits of both, accompanied by the faith of the very reverend father Felgeld, for whom, and in whom, this miracle of healing which I am now about to relate was wrought; for he was the third inheritor of the same place, and of the like spiritual warfare, and being now above seventy years of age, awaits with longing desire the advent of the life to come, and the end of the present.

§ 77. After Cudberct, the man of God, had been translated to the kingdom of heaven, Aediluuald[2] began to be an inhabitant of the same island and monastery. He was one who had been previously proved for many years in monastic discipline in the same monastery, and who, in due time, was found worthy to ascend to the rank of a hermit's perfection. He found however that the walls of the oratory there, which had been roughly and carelessly put together, had fallen into great disrepair through age, and that the planks, from being separated one from the other, gave ready access to the stormy winds. But as the venerable man looked more to the beauty of the heavenly edifice than to that of the earthly, he stopped up the chinks with straw, or clay, or whatever other material he could find, lest he should be hindered from instant prayer by the daily inclemency of the rains or the winds. When, therefore, Aediluuald discovered the place to be in such a condition, he asked his brethren who came to see him, to bring him a calf's hide, which he nailed up to stop the violence of the storms, in that corner in which he and his predecessor Cudberct were so often wont to stand or kneel in prayer.

[1] Vit. Metr. cap. xliv.—xlvi.

[2] See Eccl. Hist. V. i. § 350.

§ 78. Now after having completed twelve[1] continuous years in this place, he who entered into the joy which is above; and when Felgeld, who was the third inmate, began to inhabit this cell and oratory, it pleased Eadfrid,[2] the very reverend bishop of the church of Lindisfarne, to restore this oratory thoroughly from its foundation, for it was falling into ruin through age. Now when this work was accomplished, many persons in their devotion besought the blessed soldier of Christ, Felgeld, to give them some particle of the relics of Cudberct, who was so beloved of God, or of Aediluuald, his successor; and so he proposed to cut in pieces and give to each of the petitioners a small part of the calf's hide mentioned above. But before he gave it to others, he thought it good first to try on himself what virtue it might possess. Now he had been afflicted for a long time with a noisome redness and tumour in the face; of which the symptoms had exhibited themselves while he was yet leading a life of community along with the brethren. But since he had become a recluse, he took less care of his body, and more of his soul, he became more austere, and as if shut up in perpetual imprisonment he rarely enjoyed either the heat of the sun, or the breath of air, so that his malady increased more and more, and the inflamed tumour covered the whole of his face. Fearing therefore that the greatness of such an infirmity should oblige him to forsake his solitary life, and to return to one of community, he ventured to take a liberty in the exercise of his faith and to hope for a cure, through the intercession of those whose abode and manner of life he rejoiced to occupy and imitate. Putting, therefore, a portion of the same calf's hide into water, he washed his face with the liquid, and immediately the foul tumour and ulcer which had afflicted it entirely departed. This I learned from a devout priest of this monastery of Jarrow, who told me that he was well acquainted with Felgeld's face when it was previously swollen and deformed, and that he had afterwards felt, with his hand through the window, that it was quite cleansed, and that, at a late period, Felgeld himself affirmed that it was exactly as the priest had related it; and that, from that time, as long as he remained a recluse, which was for a long continuance of years, his face was entirely freed from every trouble of this kind, by the grace of Almighty God; even of Him who has been ever wont to cure many in this life, of bodily infirmities, and in the life to come, of all the sicknesses of soul and body; and who, satisfying our desires with good things, crowns us for ever in His mercy and loving-kindness. Amen.

END OF THE LIFE OF SAINT CUDBERCT.

[1] He died therefore in 699 or 700.

[2] It was to this Eadfrid that Beda dedicated the present piece of biography.

# THE LIVES OF THE BLESSED ABBOTS BENEDICT, CEOLFRID, EOSTERWINE, SIGFRID, AND HUUAETBERCT.

§ 1. Biscop, the religious servant of Christ, surnamed Benedict, assisted by grace from on high, built a monastery in honour of Peter, the most blessed chief of the apostles, near the mouth of the river Wear, on the north side, being aided therein by, and having a gift of land from, Aecgfrid, the venerable and most pious king of that nation, over which monastery Biscop carefully ruled for sixteen years, amid innumerable labours arising from journeyings and sicknesses; and this he did in the same spirit of religion which had induced him to erect it. And if I may be permitted to employ the words of the blessed pope Gregory,[1] in which he extols the life of an abbot who was a namesake, "he was a man of a venerable life, blessed equally by grace and name, even from his very youth bearing the head of an aged person; his manners were in advance of his years, and he abandoned his soul to no guilty pleasures." He was descended from a noble family from among the nation of the Angles;[2] and being in no respect inferior in nobility of mind, he was worthy to be exalted for ever into the society of the angels. And further, when he was the minister of king Osuiu,[3] and had received from him a possession in land suitable to his rank,—being then of about the age of twenty-five years,—he lightly esteemed this transitory inheritance, in order that he might obtain that which is eternal; he despised the warfare of this world with its corruptible rewards, that he might be the soldier of the true King, and be thought worthy to possess an everlasting kingdom in the heavenly city. He[4] forsook home, kindred, and country for the sake of Christ and his gospel, that he might receive one hundredfold, and possess the life which is eternal; he refused to bring himself in subjection to marriage after the flesh, that being pure in the glory of virginity, he might be enabled to follow the Lamb in the kingdom of heaven; he was unwilling to become the parent of mortal

[1] Greg. Dial. ii. 1, Opp. ii. 56.

[2] Benedict Biscop, called also Baducing by Fridegode, in his life of Wilfrid, was of noble family, his name occurring in the genealogy of the princes of the Lindisfaras.

[3] Osuiu began to reign in 642, and died 15th Feb. 670.

[4] Beda here seems to have had in view the sermon, which he wrote upon this text, "On the nativity of St. Benedict the abbot," a translation of which is appended to this present treatise, p. 620.

children according to the flesh, having been predestinated by Christ to rear, by spiritual instruction, for Him sons who should be eternal in the life which is in heaven.

§ 2. Therefore, having left his country he went to Rome,[1] being anxious personally to visit and worship at the places in which were deposited even the bodies of the blessed apostles, towards whom it had always been his wont to feel an ardent devotion. Having speedily returned to his own country, he did not desist from carefully loving, and venerating, and proclaiming to all to whom he could address himself, the institutes of ecclesiastical life which he had witnessed. At this time Alchfrid,[2] son of the before-named king Osuiu, having planned a journey to Rome that he might worship at the shrines of the apostles, accepted Benedict as the companion of his journey. But the king, his father, recalling him from this intended expedition, and causing him to reside in his own country and kingdom, Benedict nevertheless, like a youth of a good disposition, immediately put into execution this journey[3] which he had projected, and with the greatest haste returned to Rome during the pontificate of the pope Vitalian of blessed memory, whom we have mentioned above. On this, as on the former occasion, he imbibed the sweets of no small amount of salutary learning; and after some few months, departing from thence, on his return he went to the island of Lirins, where he associated himself with the society of monks there resident, where he received the tonsure, and having taken on himself the discipline which is according to rule and the monastic vow, he kept the same with all due care; and here, after having been instructed for the course of two years in the learning suited for the monastic conversation, he felt himself constrained by the love of the blessed Peter, the chief of the apostles, again to revisit the city consecrated by his body.

§ 3.[4] Not long after this, the arrival of a trading vessel enabled him to gratify his desire. Ecgbercht, king of Kent, had at that time sent out of Britain a person named Uigghard, who had been elected to the office of bishop; he was a person who had been sufficiently instructed in every kind of ecclesiastical institution by the Roman disciples of the blessed pope Gregory, in Kent. It was Ecgbercht's desire that he should be ordained at Rome as his own bishop, so that possessing a bishop of his own nation and language, he himself, and the people who were subject to him, might become the more perfectly instructed in the words and the mysteries of the faith, inasmuch as he would then receive them, not through the medium of an interpreter, but from the tongue and the hands of a kinsman and fellow-countryman. This Uicghard,[5]

[1] He left England in the society of Wilfrid, whom he accompanied as far as Lyons (Eccl. Hist. V. xix. § 413). This was in the middle of the year 654, according to Pagi (A.D. 658, § 9), or in the previous year, according to Smith's calculation.

[2] See Eccl. Hist. IV. xix. § 416.

[3] Florence of Worcester places this in 665, with which Smith agrees.

[4] This his third voyage to Rome was accomplished in 667, or 668, as appears from a comparison of these facts with the incidents mentioned in the Eccl. Hist. III. xxix. and IV. i.

[5] See Eccl. Hist. IV. i. § 252.

however, on his arrival at Rome, died, of a disease then spreading, before he had attained to the rank of the pontificate, as also did all his companions who accompanied him. In order that this pious embassy of the faithful should not fail in its due fruits by consequence of the decease of the ambassadors, the apostolic pope, having taken the matter into deliberation, chose one of his own people to send as an archbishop into Britain; Theodore, namely, a person skilled no less in secular than in ecclesiastical philosophy, and this in Greek as well as in Latin; and he assigned to him, as his colleague and counsellor, a man equally energetic and prudent, the abbot Hadrian. And as he had observed that the venerable Benedict was a man of a mind fraught with wisdom, perseverance, religion, and nobleness, to him he entrusted the bishop whom he had ordained, together with all his party; and he enjoined Benedict to abandon the pilgrimage which he had undertaken for Christ's sake, and out of regard to a higher advantage to return homewards and introduce into England that teacher of the truth whom it had so earnestly sought after; to whom he might become no less a guide on the journey than an interpreter in his teaching after his arrival. Benedict did as he was commanded; they arrived in Kent;[1] they were most cordially received; Theodore ascended the throne of his episcopal see; Benedict undertook the government of the monastery of the blessed Peter the apostle, of which at a later period the aforesaid Hadrian was made the abbot.

§ 4. Here he ruled this monastery for two years, after which he completed, with his usual good success, a third journey[2] which he undertook to Rome, and brought back with him no inconsiderable number of books on every branch of sacred literature; and these he had either bought at a price, or received as presents from his friends. Arriving at Vienne on his homeward journey, he received back the books which he had purchased, and which he had entrusted to their keeping. On his entry into Britain, he thought to have gone to Conuualh,[3] king of the West Saxons, (whose friendship he had more than once experienced, and by whose good services he had been assisted,) but at this very time he was cut off by a premature death; and Benedict, bending his steps to his native people and the district in which he had been born, visited Aecfrid, the king of the region beyond the Humber. To him he recapitulated all his exploits since the time when, in his youth, he had left his home; he did not conceal the desire for a religious life with which he burned; he explained to him the whole of the ecclesiastical and monastic institutions which he had learned either at Rome or elsewhere; he displayed the many divine volumes and the numerous relics of the blessed apostles and martyrs of Christ; and so intimate was the gracious friendship to which he was admitted, that the king immediately granted him, from his own property, land for seventy families, and commanded him thereon to erect a monastery [to be

[1] Theodore arrived in Kent 679.

[2] The third journey from Britain, but in reality the fourth to Rome, took place in 671, two years, namely, after the arrival of Theodore at Canterbury.

[3] The Saxon Chronicle places the death of Conuualh in 672.

dedicated] to the chief pastor of the church. And this he did, as I mentioned in the prologue,[1] at the left[2] of the river Wear, in the year 674 from our Lord's incarnation, in the second indiction, and in the fourth year of the reign of king Ecgfrid.

§ 5. After an interval of not more than a single[3] year from the foundation of the monastery, Benedict crossed the ocean and passed into Gaul, when he made inquiry for masons who could build him a church of stone after the Roman style, which he always loved. These he obtained, and brought them home with him; and such zeal in the work did he exhibit—out of his love for the blessed Peter, to whose honour he was doing this—that in the course of one year from the time when the foundations were laid, the church was roofed over, and within it you might have witnessed the celebration of masses. When the work was drawing to its completion, he sent messengers to Gaul to bring over glass-makers (a kind of workman hitherto unknown in Britain) to glaze the windows of the church, and its aisles[4] and chancels. And so it happened that when they came they not only accomplished that particular work which was required of them, but from this time they caused the English nation to understand and learn this kind of handicraft, which was of no inconsiderable utility for the enclosing of the lamps of the church, or for various uses to which vessels are put. Moreover this religious trader took care to import from the regions beyond the sea, if he could not find them at home, whatever related to the ministry of the altar and the church, and to holy vessels, and vestments.

§ 6. And since there were some things necessary for the ornament and defence of his church, which this diligent provider could not discover even in Gaul, these he obtained from Rome; and thus completing his fourth journey,[5] (after he had established his monastery according to rule,) he returned laden with a more abundant supply of spiritual merchandize than hitherto. In the first place, he imported a numberless collection of all kinds of books. Secondly, he introduced an abundant grace of the relics of the blessed apostles and martyrs of Christ, which were profitable to many a church of the English. Thirdly, he brought in to his own monastery the order of chanting, singing, and ministering in the church, according to the manner of the Roman institution; having

[1] See § 1.

[2] That is, on the northern bank.

[3] Beda here means that only one completed year intervened; for we learn from the anonymous narrative, upon which this present piece of biography is founded, that this event occurred during the second year after the monastery had been founded; therefore in 676, or, perhaps, in 677.

[4] "... ad cancellandas ecclesiæ, porticuumque et cœnaculorum ejus fenestras..." are the expressions used in the original. The translation is offered with hesitation. "The Latin term, *porticus*, which certainly sometimes means a porch, is used by Middle-age authors in various senses, sometimes for a bay of an aisle, especially if fitted up with an altar as a chapel. See Bentham's History of Ely, p. 18, and Archæolog. xiii. 290, 308."—*Glossary of Architecture.*

[5] This expedition (his fourth from England, but really his fifth to Rome) should probably be referred to the year 678, pope Agatho, who is presently mentioned in conjunction with it, having been consecrated in the June or July of that year.

asked and obtained from pope Agatho, permission to take back with him into Britain[1] John, the archchanter of the church of the blessed apostle Peter, and abbot of the monastery of the blessed Martin, a Roman, who was to become the future master of his own monastery, and of the English nation. On his arrival there, this man not only delivered orally to his scholars what he had learned at Rome, but left behind him a number of things which he had committed to writing; which, for the sake of being held in remembrance, are still preserved in the library of the said monastery. Fourthly, Benedict brought no mean gift, namely, an epistle of privileges,[2] conferred upon the monastery by the venerable pope Agatho; and this he had obtained by the permission, consent, desire, and encouragement of king Ecgfrid, by which instrument it was made perpetually exempt and totally safe and free from all external invasion. Fifthly, he carried home with him paintings of holy subjects for the ornament of the church of the blessed Peter the apostle, which he had built: a representation, namely, of the blessed mother of God, and ever-virgin Mary, as well as of the twelve apostles, which girt the middle "testudo" of the same church, a boarding having been run from wall to wall: the figures of the gospel history, with which to decorate the southern part of the church: the images of the visions of the apocalypse of the blessed John, with which, in like manner, he purposed to decorate the wall on the north;—to the intent that all who entered the church, even if ignorant of letters, might be able to contemplate, in what direction soever they looked, the ever-gracious countenance of Christ and his saints, even though it were in a representation; or with a more wakeful mind, might be reminded of the grace of our Lord's incarnation; or, having as it were the strictness of the last judgment before their eyes, should thereby be cautioned to examine themselves with the more narrow scrutiny.

§ 7. So it was that king Ecgfrid, much delighted with the virtue, industry, and piety of the venerable Benedict, made a further donation[1] of land to that which he had formerly given him for the erection of the monastery; for, perceiving that he had laid it out well and profitably, he took care to augment with a gift equivalent to the possession of forty families. And here, at the advice, or rather at the command of the aforesaid king Ecgfrid, after the interval of one year, Benedict sent about eighteen monks, over whom he placed Ceolfrid as their abbot and presbyter; and he built the monastery of the blessed apostle Paul, on this principle—that mutual peace and concord, mutual and perpetual affection and kindness, should be continued between the two places; so that, (for the sake of illustration,) just as the body may not be severed from the head by which it breathes, nor may the head forget the body, without which it has no life,—in like manner no one should attempt in any way to disturb the union between these two monasteries,

[1] See Eccl. Hist. IV. xviii. § 305.

[2] See Ibid.

[3] From the information contained in the anonymous legend, we may place this new donation as having occurred A.D. 682.

joined together as they were in the brotherly concord of the two chief of the apostles. In this undertaking, Benedict's most strenuous assistant was Ceolfrid, (whom he had appointed abbot,) from the very first commencement of the earlier monastery, and who at the fitting time had gone with him to Rome, as well for the purpose of learning all necessary instruction as for prayer. On which occasion he also chose the priest Eosteruini to be abbot of the monastery of the blessed Peter, and placed him as a lawful ruler over the same; in order that the labour which, if borne by one individual, was insupportable, might be lightened by the courage of this dearly beloved fellow-soldier. Nor let it appear strange to any person that one monastery should have two abbots at one and the same time; for this was occasioned by his frequent absence for the good of that establishment, and by his repeated journeys backwards and forwards across the ocean. History relates that the most blessed Peter the apostle,[1] under the pressure of an urgent occasion, appointed under him two pontiffs, who should in due course govern the church at Rome; and the great abbot Benedict[2] himself, as the blessed pope Gregory writes concerning him, placed twelve abbots over his disciples (for so he thought it expedient to do); and this without breach of love, or rather for its increase.

§ 8. This person[3] then, of whom we have spoken, undertook the care of governing the monastery in the ninth[4] year after its foundation, and he remained in the office until his death, which occurred four years afterwards. He was noble by worldly birth; but, unlike some, he did not make this honour of his nobility an occasion for boastfulness and for despising others; but rather he employed it as conducive to greater nobility of mind, as becomes the servant of God. He was the cousin of his abbot Benedict; but so great was the simplicity of disposition in both of them, so great their contempt for the nobility of this world, that the one, when he entered the monastery, sought no honour for himself above the others, out of regard to his kindred or high birth, nor did the other think of offering it; but this youth, in his good intentions, was satisfied in submitting to the regular discipline, exactly as did the rest of the brethren. So much was this the case, that he, who had been the minister of king Aecgfrid, leaving at once all worldly business, and laying down his arms, and devoting himself solely to spiritual warfare, continued so humble, so like the rest of the brethren, that it was a pleasure to him obediently to be employed, along with them, in winnowing and grinding, in milking the ewes and cows, in working in the bakehouse, the garden, and the kitchen, and in every other occupation in the monastery. Even after he had assumed the title and rank of abbot, he retained the same disposition to all men as he had done before, according to the admo-

[1] See Ephiphan. Hæres. xxvii. Natal. Alexand. Hist. Eccl. iv. 369. Mabillon (sec. ii. p. 1005) has collected other examples of a similar arrangement.

[2] Vita S. Benedicti, cap. viii. ap. Mabill. Acta SS. sec. i. p. 10.

[3] Concerning Easterwin, see the Acta SS. mens. Mart. i. 652.

[4] Wearmouth having been founded in 674, the incident here mentioned in the text must be referred to 682.

nition of a certain wise man, who says, "They have made thee a ruler, be not puffed up, but be among them like one of themselves, meek, affable, and gentle to all." And yet of a truth, whenever he saw it necessary, he checked the sinner with the discipline which is according to rule; but such was his innate loving disposition, that he preferred warning those persons who were inclined to sin, that they should not by so doing cloud the clear light of his countenance, by bringing over it a shadow of disquiet. Frequently, when he went out anywhere for the furtherance of the business of the monastery, whenever he found the brethren at work, it was his custom to join them forthwith in their labour, either by directing the plough-handle, or working iron with the forge-hammer, or using the winnowing-fan in his hand, or doing something or other of the same sort; for he was a youth of great strength and of pleasing address, of a cheerful temper, and of a liberal disposition and comely presence. He partook of the same food as did the other brethren, and always took his meals in the same house; he slept in the same common dormitory, as he had done before being made abbot; so that even after his disease came upon him, and when he was well assured from undoubted signs that the day of his death was at hand, he still continued for two days in the common dormitory of the brethren. The remaining five days before the hour of his death he spent in a more private abode, and on the very day of his decease, he came out, and seating himself in the open air, he called to him all the brethren; and as his kindly disposition prompted him, he gave the kiss of peace to them as they were weeping and lamenting for the departure of so good a father and shepherd. He died on the nones of March [March 7, 685], in the night, while the brethren were engaged in the lauds the morning psalmody. He was twenty-four years old when he entered the monastery, he lived twelve years in it; he spent seven years in the office of the priesthood, four of which he devoted to the government of the monastery; and thus deserting his earthly limbs and dying members, he sought the kingdom of heaven.

§ 9. Having thus briefly touched upon those incidents in the life of the venerable Aeosteruuyni, let us return to the order of our narrative. When Benedict had appointed this man abbot over the monastery of the blessed Peter the apostle, and Ceolfrid over that of the blessed Paul, he shortly afterwards proceeded, for the fifth time,[1] from Britain to Rome, and he returned (as was his custom) enriched with countless gifts for ecclesiastical purposes; enriched, I say, with an equally large supply of sacred volumes, and no less abundance of holy representations than on previous occasions. He then brought with him paintings illustrative of our Lord's history, with which he encircled the whole church of the blessed mother of God which he had erected in the larger monastery; and for the adorning of the monastery and the church of the blessed apostle Paul he brought images exhibiting and illustrating the harmony between the Old and the New Testaments, admirably composed; as for

[1] This was in 684, and he returned in 685.

example, the painting represented, in immediate juxtaposition, Isaac bearing the wood on which he was to be slain, and our Lord carrying the cross on which He was to suffer; the serpent raised up by Moses in the wilderness was compared with the Son of man exalted upon the cross. He also brought home, among other things, two silken palls of incomparable workmanship, with which he afterwards purchased from king Aldfrid and his counsellors (for on his return he found that king Ecgfrid was already slain) land equivalent for three families, on the south bank of the river Wear, near its mouth.

§ 10. But amidst the prosperity which on his return he brought with him, he found sorrows awaiting him at home; namely, that the venerable presbyter, Eosteruuini (whom at his departure he had appointed abbot), and no small number of the body of the brethren committed to his care, had died by the pestilence which was then everywhere raging. Yet there was this consolation, namely, that he presently discovered that Sicgfrid the deacon, a man no less reverend than meek, had been appointed as the successor of Eosteruuyni over the same monastery, by the choice as well of his own brethren as also of his fellow-abbot, Ceolfrid. He was a man thoroughly skilled in the knowledge of the Scriptures, adorned with most excellent manners, endowed with wonderful power of abstinence; yet one in whom bodily infirmity depressed, to a great degree, the activity of the virtues of the mind, and who, under the affliction of a dangerous and incurable disease of the lungs, preserved innocency of heart.

§ 11. Not long after this, Benedict himself began to be oppressed with disease. For in order that the kindred virtue of patience might give proof of their continuance in well-doing, God's loving-kindness stretched them both upon the bed of temporal sickness, that after they had overcome sorrow by death, He might cherish them in that perpetual rest of peace and light which is above. For, as we have said, Sigfrid, chastened by a long internal disease, drew near his end, and Benedict was so reduced by palsy—which had gradually and slowly increased upon him for three years—that he was entirely dead in the lower extremities, the upper portion of the body, without which life cannot be sustained, being reserved alive for the exhibition of his patience and virtue; and yet they both studied how, in their sorrows, they might give continual thanks to their Creator, how they might always be employed in praising God and exhorting their brethren. Benedict very frequently discoursed with the brethren who came to him, with the object of confirming them in keeping the rule which he had given them; thus saying: "Do not imagine that the rules which I have laid down for you I have derived from my own untutored heart; for whatever I discovered to be the most valuable in the management of the seventeen monasteries which I visited during my long and frequent travels, with all those I made myself acquainted, and have given them to you for your profit and guidance." He commanded that the most noble and most precious library which he had brought from Rome, and which was necessary for the instruction of the church, should be carefully preserved entire, enjoining that it should neither be soiled by neglect, nor broken up and dispersed. There

was one injunction which he was used to repeat frequently and earnestly; namely this, that in making choice of an abbot, they should rather seek after probity of life and doctrine, than exalted birth. "And I tell you of a truth," he said, "that in the comparison of two evils, it would be much more tolerable for me that this whole place, in which I have built a monastery, should be reduced into an eternal wilderness, should God so please it, rather than that any brother of mine according to the flesh, of whom we are assured that he has not entered into the way of truth, should succeed me as abbot in its government. Therefore, my brethren, be exceedingly careful that you never choose a father on account of his high birth, nor one from any foreign place; but in accordance with the rule of our former abbot, the great Benedict, (as is contained in the decrees of our bull of privilege,) seek out, with common consent, in the convent of your own congregation, for the man who, by reason of his virtuous life and wise doctrine, shall appear the most worthy and best fitted for the discharge of such an office, and choose that person whom all consider the best, according to this inquiry of unanimous love; and having summoned the bishop, let him be entreated that this man be confirmed as your abbot, with the accustomed blessing. For," said he, "those who beget sons according to the flesh must of necessity seek heirs who are according to the flesh, that they may inherit a possession which is carnal and earthly; but they who beget spiritual sons to God by the spiritual seed of the Word, whatever they do ought to be spiritual. Let them, then, reckon him the eldest son among their spiritual children, who is endowed with the more abundant grace of the Spirit; just as earthly parents are wont to acknowledge their first-born son as the chief among their other offspring, and to him they give the preference in the division of the heritage."

§ 12. Nor is this to be passed over, namely, that the venerable abbot Benedict, to moderate the weariness of the long night, which he frequently passed in sleeplessness, in consequence of the pressure of his infirmity, having summoned a reader, requested that there should be read to him the example afforded by the patience of Job, or some other passage of Scripture, by which a sick man might be comforted, or by which one bent down by infirmities might be the more spiritually elevated to heavenly things. And being entirely unable to rise from his bed to pray, and as it was difficult for him to raise his voice to fulfil the service of the usual psalmody, he learnt, (for he was a wise man, and his love of religion taught it to him,) on the recurrence of each successive hour of the daily or nightly prayer, to summon some of the brethren to him, that they might sing the accustomed psalms, in two choirs, he himself joining with them, to the best of his ability; and so, by their assistance, he supplied that which he was unable of himself to accomplish.

§ 13. And now both of these abbots perceived that they were worn out by their long-continued infirmity, and that death was not far distant from either, and that neither of them was any longer qualified for the government of the monastery,—for so great on them was bodily affliction, though in it was perfected the strength

of Christ;—then they mutually expressed a desire to see each other, and converse together, before they departed from the world. And so Sigfrid was carried on a bier to the chamber in which Benedict was lying on his pallet; and both of them being placed by their attendants on the same couch, their heads were laid on the same pillow,—a lamentable spectacle!—for so weak were they, that though their faces came near together, they had not the power to kiss each other, but even in this they required the assistance of the brotherhood. Benedict took wholesome counsel with Sigfrid and with all the rest of the brethren, and then sent for Ceolfrid, the abbot whom he had placed over the monastery of the blessed apostle Paul; a man endeared to him no less by nearness of relationship than by kindred virtues; and he appointed him as father over both the monasteries, all the rest giving their assent and considering that such an arrangement was most expedient; for they concluded that it would be most important, in every respect, for the preservation of peace, unity, and concord between these two places, if they should always have over them one father and governor. Benedict very frequently quoted, in reference to this matter, the example of the kingdom of Israel, which always continued invincible and inviolate by foreign nations, so long as it was ruled by one and the same leader, who was of its own race; but when afterwards—on account of its former sins—it was split up into divisions by hostile factions, it fell, by little and little, and crumbled away from its earlier stability. He also reminded them of that sentence of the gospel, which ought never to be forgotten, that "every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation." [Matt. xii. 25.]

§ 14. Two months after these occurrences, the venerable and God-beloved abbot Sigfrid was the first who, having passed through the fire and water of temporal tribulations,[1] was introduced into the refreshment of eternal rest, and entered into the dwelling-place of the heavenly King, paying to the Lord, in the sacrifice of perpetual praise, those offerings which he had vowed and promised so frequently with his pure lips. Four months after this,[2] Benedict, who had so nobly conquered vices and achieved so many virtuous deeds, overpowered by the weakness of the flesh, approached his dissolution. Night drew on, chilly with the blasts of winter, shortly to be succeeded by a day of eternal happiness, calmness, and light. The brethren assemble at the church, and pass the gloom of the night without sleep, for they are occupied in prayers and psalms, cheering the grief of their father's departure with the unceasing chant of God's praise. Others continually remain in the chamber in which the sick man—sick indeed in body, but strong in mind—was await-

[1] Sigfrid died on the eleventh of the kalends of September, (22 Aug.) 688, four months before Benedict, who survived until the month of January, 689.

[2] There is some uncertainty among earlier writers as to the year of Benedict's death. Baronius (A.D. 703, § 4), Bollandus (Acta SS. mens. Jan. i. 745, § 10), Alford (ad an. § 1), ascribe it to the year 703; herein deceived by Sigebertus Gemblacensis, Wendover, and M. Westminster. Pagi and Smith fix the event as having occurred in January, 690; but the anonymous legend upon which the present narrative is based leaves no room for doubt, stating that he died 12th January, 689. A translation of that narrative will be found in its proper place.

ing his departure from death and his entrance into life. The whole night long the Gospel is read by a priest, as was the custom upon other nights, that it might soothe the pain of the sufferer; the sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood is administered to him, the hour of his departure drawing near, as a provision for the journey; and so this holy spirit, tried and purified with the long flames of the beneficial scourge, abandons the earthly vessel of the flesh, and in its freedom wings its way to the glory of the bliss which is above. That his departure was most victorious, and unimpeded or interrupted by any foul spirits whatever, is established, even by the Psalm which they were at that time chanting for him. For the brethren had assembled in the church at the beginning of the night, and as they were singing through the Psalter, they had at that time arrived, in their course, at the eighty-second Psalm, which has for its title the words, "Lord, who shall be like unto Thee?" The import of the whole text of the Psalm is this; that the enemies of the name of Christ, whether they be after the flesh or after the spirit, are always endeavouring to destroy and disperse the collective church of Christ, and every faithful soul which is within that church; whereas, on the contrary, they themselves shall be confounded, and scattered, and shall perish everlastingly, the Lord depriving them of their strength, to whom no one is equal, and who "only is the most Highest over all the earth." [Ps. lxxxiii. 18.] Wherefore we may rightly conclude that it was by God's providence that this Psalm was being said at the hour in which his spirit departed from his body; since against him, by the assistance of the Lord, no enemy could prevail. This confessor went to rest in the Lord in the sixteenth year from his foundation of the monastery, on the day before the ides of January [14th Jan.], and was buried in the church of the blessed apostle Peter; so that even after his death, his body was not far removed from the altar and relics of him whom he, during his lifetime, had been wont always to love, and who had opened to him the gate of everlasting life, that he might enter therein. As we have already said, he governed the monastery sixteen years; the first eight by himself, without the assistance of another associated abbot; the last eight with the assistance of the venerable and holy men Eosteruuyni, Sigfrid, and Ceolfrid, who shared with him the name, authority, and rank of abbots, the first for four years, the second for three, and the third for one.

§ 15. He who was the third of these, namely, Ceolfrid, was a man of considerable industry, of an acute understanding, energetic in action, of an experienced judgment, and fervent in his zeal for religion; and he was the first of those who, (as we have mentioned above,) by the command and assistance of Benedict, founded, perfected, and governed the monastery of the blessed Paul the apostle during seven years, and afterwards, during twenty-eight years,[1] skilfully presided over both monasteries, or rather, to speak more accurately, over the single monastery of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, which was situated in two distinct places. What-

[1] The anonymous legend here says twenty-seven years, excluding the year in which his resignation took place.

ever good and virtuous works his predecessor had commenced, this man took care with no less energy to complete. Among other things, which, during his long government of the monastery, he discovered it necessary to make, he constructed several oratories; he increased the number of the vessels of the altar and the church, and the vestments of every kind; the library of each monastery, which the abbot Benedict had commenced with great perseverance, with no inferior perseverance he doubled; for he added three "Pandects"[1] of the new translation, to the single copy of the older version which he had brought from Rome, one of which, on his return to Rome in his old age, he took with him as a gift; of the other two, he left one to each monastery. Besides, in exchange for a book upon cosmography, of admirable workmanship, which Benedict had purchased at Rome, he obtained from king Aldfrid—a man most learned in the Scriptures—the land for eight families, near the river Fresca,[2] for the property of the monastery of the blessed apostle Paul; this arrangement had been agreed upon between Benedict and the same king Aldfrid during the life of the former, but he died before it was completed. Instead of this piece of land, Ceolfrid, at a later time, during the reign of Osred, having paid a proportionate additional price, received in exchange the land of twenty families, in the place called by the natives 'Ad villam Sambucæ,'[3] because it was nearer the same monastery. Having sent monks to Rome during the time of pope Sergius, of blessed memory, he obtained from him a privilege for the protection of his monastery, similar to that which pope Agatho had given to Benedict. Having brought this back to Britain, and produced it before a synod, it was confirmed by the subscription as well of the bishops as of the noble king Aldfrid, in like manner as it is notorious that the former instrument had been publicly confirmed in a synod by the king and bishops of that period. At that time that aged and religious servant of Christ, Uitmaer, skilled no less in secular learning than in the Scriptures, made a donation for ever to the monastery of the blessed Peter the apostle, which he then governed, consisting of the land of ten families, situated in the vill which is called Daltun,[4] which he had himself received in possession from king Aldfrid.

§ 16. But Ceolfrid, having now disciplined himself for a long period in the regular observance which the prudent father [Benedict] had established, as well for himself as for his followers, upon the

[1] See Beda on the Six Ages, A.D. 720.

[2] This stream is now unknown. Surtees, the historian of the county of Durham, says, "I will not pretend to settle the locality of either Sambuce or Fresca." It is by no means improbable that Seaham is meant, and that the Fresca is the brook which there falls into the sea, after its course down the valley in which Daltun is situated. Both Seaham and Dalton were restored to the church by Athelstan, and were then considered as appendages to South Wearmouth. See Surtees, vol. i. part ii. p. 4.

[3] Probably Elwick (ellen-wic, "the town of the elder-tree"), a little to the south of Wearmouth.

[4] Dalton-le-dale, on the road from Wearmouth to Easington. Smith's text reads Daldun, which is a township in the parish of Dalton-le-dale; the one is the "dale-dene," the other the "dale-town."

authority of the ancients, and having given evidence that he possessed a most inimitable skill in praying and singing, which he ceased not to practise daily; after having exhibited a wonderful zeal in restraining the wicked, and a corresponding modesty in comforting the weak; after having employed so great an abstinence in eating and drinking, and such meanness in dress, as are seldom observed among rulers,—he at length perceived that he was old and full of days, and that he could no longer, in consequence of the difficulties occasioned by his extreme age, carry out the required rule of spiritual exercise either in teaching or living. After long and careful deliberation with himself, he thought it more advantageous that the brethren,—after he had enjoined them to act in accordance with the statutes of their privilege, and also with the rule of the holy abbot Benedict,—should themselves choose one of the more efficient of their own number as their father; and that he, for his part, would set out to revisit the holy places of the blessed apostles at Rome, where he had been in his youth with Benedict; to the end, that, before his death, he might have some relaxation for a while from the cares of the world, and commune with himself all the more freely in quiet seclusion; and that they also, having obtained a younger abbot, should all the more perfectly observe the rules of a regular life under his more energetic government.

§ 17. Although at the outset all opposed this arrangement, and knelt before him with many tears and sobs, and continued entreaties, yet in the end he accomplished his purpose; and so earnest was he in his desire of departing, that he commenced his journey on the third day after he had announced to the brethren his intention of leaving them. For he was apprehensive of that which really did come to pass, namely, that he would not survive until he should reach Rome; and he wished to escape the delays which would arise from the interruptions occasioned by his friends or the nobility, with all of whom he stood in high estimation, and he was fearful that money would be given him by some persons, which he would not be able at that time to return; for he had laid down this custom, that if any person offered him any gift, he would return it either forthwith, or after a fitting interval, with no less of liberality. Therefore, after the first morning mass had been chanted in the church of the blessed mother of God and of the ever-virgin Mary, and in the church of the apostle Peter, on the day before the nones of June [4th June, 716], on the fifth day of the week[1] [Thursday], and all those who were present having communicated, preparation was made for his immediate departure. All assemble in the church of the blessed Peter, and when he had lighted the incense and said the prayer at the altar, standing upon the steps and holding the censer in his hand, he gives his peace to them all. From thence they go out, the weeping of them all mingling with their litanies: they enter the oratory of the blessed martyr Laurence, which was opposite them in the dormitory of the brethren. Here he gives them his last farewell: he admonishes

[1] The dominical letter for the year being D, the 4th of June fell upon a Thursday in 716.

them to preserve mutual peace, and to punish the offenders according to the rule of the gospel: he offers to all who might perchance have offended him, the grace of his forgiveness and good-will: he entreats all to pray for him and to be reconciled to him, if there were any whom he might have rebuked with too great severity. They come to the shore; again they kneel down, and the kiss of peace is given to all amidst their tears; he prays, he enters the ship with his attendants. The deacons of the church embark with him, carrying lighted torches and a golden cross: he passes the river, he prays at the cross, he mounts his horse and departs, leaving in the monasteries brethren to the number of nearly six hundred.

§ 18. When he and his companions had departed, the brethren return to the church, and with tears and prayers recommend themselves and their affairs to the Lord; and after the lapse of no great interval of time, having finished the psalms of the third hour, they all assemble once more; they consult what shall be done; and they come to the conclusion that an abbot shall be sought from the Lord as soon as possible, with prayers, and psalmody, and fasting; and this their determination they intimate to their brethren, the monks of the blessed Paul, by some of that body who happened to be present, as well as by some of the inmates of their own monastery. They also give their assent, one spirit influences each monastery, the hearts of all and the voices of all are raised up unto the Lord. At length, on the third day, on the arrival of the Sunday of Pentecost,[1] all those who were in the monastery of the blessed Peter meet in deliberation, and of the monastery of the blessed Paul not a few of the elders are present. All were of one mind and of one opinion; and so Huuaetbercht was chosen abbot, who had been well and carefully instructed in the same monastery from his earliest infancy, not only in the observance of the regular discipline, but one who was also well exercised in writing, chanting, reading, and teaching. He had moreover journeyed to Rome, in the days of pope Sergius, of blessed memory, and had tarried there no small space of time; and there he had learnt, and transcribed, and brought away with him whatsoever he considered necessary. Besides this, he had for twelve years discharged the office of the priesthood. Having been now elected abbot by all the brethren of the two monasteries, he immediately took with him some of the brethren and came to the abbot Ceolfrid, who was waiting for the arrival of a vessel in which to cross the ocean. They inform him whom they have chosen abbot; he answers, "Thanks be to God!" He confirms the election, and receives from Huuaetbercht a letter of recommendation to be delivered to the apostolic pope Gregory: some passages from which we have thought fit to introduce into our work for the sake of their preservation.

§ 19. "To the thrice-blessed pope Gregory, his most beloved lord in the Lord of lords, Huuaetbercht, your most humble servant, the abbot of the monastery of Peter, the most blessed prince of

[1] Here too Beda's calculation is accurate, Whitsunday falling upon June 7.

the apostles, which is in Saxony, wishes eternal health in the Lord. I, together with the holy brethren who desire in these places to find rest for their souls by carrying the easy yoke of Christ, cease not to render thanks to the providence of the heavenly Judge, that he has thought fit to appoint you, who are such a glorious vessel of election, to be the ruler of the church universal in our times; and by means of the light of truth and faith with which you are filled, to disperse the beams of his love among your inferiors. But most beloved father and lord in Christ, we recommend to your holy benignity the venerable grey hairs of our most dear father, namely, Ceolfrid the abbot, the man who has nourished and defended our spiritual liberty and peace in this monastic retreat. And, first of all, we give thanks to the holy and undivided Trinity, that he has reached the holy joys of the repose which he has so long desired, though this his departure from among us has been to us an occasion of much grief, sighing, lamentation, and tears; for those shrines of the blessed apostles which it was to him a cause of unceasing joy to remember and repeat that he had seen and adored in his youth, even in his exhausted old age he has devoutly revisited; and after the long labours and continued anxieties of forty years, during which he has been occupied as an abbot in the government of monasteries,—such is his wonderful love of virtue,—like one for the first time summoned to the conversation of the life which is in heaven, in his extreme old age, and even now on the brink of the grave, he begins, for the second time, to be a pilgrim for Christ's sake, that the fire of repentance might the more readily burn up the thorns of his early worldly anxieties in the spiritual furnace.

"Moreover we entreat your fatherly affection, that you will carefully perform towards him (what we were not allowed to do) the last office of affection; being fully assured of this, that although you possess his body, yet we, as well as you, will possess in his devout spirit, whether it continue in the body, or be freed from the bonds of the flesh, a powerful intercessor and patron with God's mercy for our transgressions."

The epistle contained some other passages.

§ 20. On the return home of Hunaetbercht, bishop Acca[1] was summoned, and confirmed him in the office of abbot with the accustomed benediction. Among the innumerable privileges of the monastery which he recovered by his youthful energy and wisdom, there was this, which afforded the greatest pleasure and gratification to all; namely, he took up the bones of the abbot Eosterwini, which had been deposited in the porch at the entrance of the church of the blessed apostle Peter, and the bones of his former master, the abbot Sigfrid, which had been interred on the outside of the sacristy, towards the south; and having placed them both in one shrine, (which, however, had a division down the middle,) he deposited it within the same church, near the body of the blessed father Benedict. And this he did on the day of the nativity of Sigfrid, that is, on the eleventh of the kalends of September

[1] Acca, bishop of Hexham, in whose diocese Wearmouth was situated.

[22d August], on which day it also happened, by the wonderful providence of God, that Uitmaer, the venerable servant of Christ, whom we have mentioned above, deceased, and was buried in the place in which the aforesaid abbots had previously been interred, he being an imitator of their examples.

§ 21. But Ceolfrid, the servant of Christ, as we have previously stated, as he was journeying onward to the shrines of the blessed apostles, was attacked with disease, and died before he arrived there. For having reached Langres,[1] about the third hour of the day, he departed to the Lord, about the tenth hour of the same day; and on the morrow was honourably buried in the church of the blessed brother-martyrs, amidst the tears and lamentations not only of the native English who, to the number of more than eighty, were in his retinue, but also of the inhabitants of the place, who were distressed at his loss. Nor indeed was it easy for any person to refrain from tears when they saw one portion of his companions proceeding on their journey without their father; another portion, having changed their intention of going to Rome, preferring to return homewards to give an account of his funeral; and a third division lingering round the tomb of the deceased,—such was their undying affection for their father,—even in the midst of a people whose language they did not understand.

§ 22. At the time of his death he was seventy-four years of age, forty-seven of which he had passed in the office of the priesthood; he had ministered in the abbot's office for thirty-five years, or rather for forty-three, since from the very commencement of the period when Benedict began to build his monastery to the honour of the most blessed prince of the apostles, Ceolfrid had been his constant companion and assistant, and the teacher of the regular and monastic institution. No pressure of old age, or infirmity, or journeying, ever occasioned him to relax the strictness of the primitive discipline; for even from the very day of his departure from his monastery, until the day in which he died, that is, from the day before the nones of June [4th June], till the 7th of the kalends of October [25th Sept.],—one hundred and fourteen days—he took care that the psalter was twice chanted according to order, besides the canonical hours of prayer; and even during the period when he had become so very weak that, being unable any longer to ride, he had to be carried in a horse-litter, he daily, after the mass had been chanted, offered to God the offering of the salutary host, with the exception only of the single day on which he was crossing the ocean, and on the three immediately preceding his decease.

§ 23. He died on the 7th of the kalends of October [25th Sept.], in the year 716 from the incarnation of our Lord, on the sixth day of the week [Friday], after the ninth hour of the day, in the fields of the above-named town; and on the morrow he was buried on the south of the same town, in the monastery of the brethren, which is one mile distant from it, accompanied by a considerable body, not only of the English who had come with him, but also of

[1] A bishopric in Champagne, in the archbishopric of Lyons, formerly a place of considerable importance both civilly and ecclesiastically.

the inhabitants of that monastery and city, all of whom chanted psalms. These brother-martyrs, in whose monastery and church he was buried, are named Speusippus, Eleusippus, and Mellusippus. Their mother bare them at one birth, and they were regenerated in the faith of the same church along with their grandmother Leonella; and they left behind them a memory of their martyrdom worthy of the place; and I trust that they will vouchsafe to me, though I be unworthy, and to our father, the aid of their intercession and protection.

## A SERMON UPON THE NATIVITY OF SAINT BENEDICT THE ABBOT.

A Sermon of the blessed Beda, priest and confessor, upon the Nativity of Saint Benedict the abbot, who built the Monastery of Saint Peter, the chief of the apostles, which is called Aet Wyre-muthe, in the region of the Northumbrians.

*"Then answered Peter and said unto Him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?*

*"And Jesus said unto them, . . . Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."*—St. Matth. xix. 27—29.

Peter having heard the Lord say, that it was a hard thing for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. . . . [&c.] And of this thing, dearly beloved brethren, we have had a frequent example among ourselves; for when we have been journeying anywhere, upon necessary occasions, we have found that every monastic habitation was as open to us as if it had been our own: we have observed that all people were well inclined to serve us, out of their own most sincere devotion. But chiefly do we see the truth of this whole lesson most thoroughly verified in the case of our father Benedict, of blessed memory; the day of whose venerable assumption we now, at this time, commemorate with due solemnity. For, having left all, he followed Christ, when he despised all that he had gained, or might have gained, in the service of the king, (for he was of noble birth,) and hastened as a pilgrim to the shrines of the blessed apostles at Rome: and preferred to receive the pattern of a perfect life from that spot where the chief head of the whole church was placed on high by the principal apostles of Christ; for the faith and the ecclesiastical institutions were as yet imperfect among the nation of the Angles. There, then, he was instructed in Christ; he received the tonsure in those parts; there he was made acquainted with monastic rules; and there it was his intention to have spent the whole period of his life, had not he been prevented

from so doing by the apostolic authority of our lord the pope, who enjoined him to return to his own country, that he might conduct to Britain archbishop Theodore, of holy memory.

§ 2. No long time after this, his love of what was good having become known to the kings of this world, they took care to present him with a site for the erection of a monastery; and of this they did not rob any of their inferiors in rank, but gave it from their own property. When he became possessed of this, he forthwith established it, both within and without, according to the most perfect form of regular discipline; not imposing upon us laws originating in his own caprice, but laying down, for the guidance of himself and his followers, the best established statutes of the ancients, as he had ascertained them during his pilgrimage. It ought not to appear irksome to any of you, brethren, if we are speaking about things with which you are well acquainted, but rather think this a pleasant thing; for we speak of what is true, when we record the spiritual exploits of our father, in whom, by a manifest miracle, our Lord fulfilled that which he had promised to his faithful followers; namely, that "every one that hath forsaken house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold in this world, and in the world to come everlasting life." For he, indeed, left his kindred when he left his country; but he received an hundredfold, since not only in this country was he held in due veneration by all persons for his continuance in well-doing, but further, both in Gaul and in Italy, in Rome also, and in the islands of the sea, so beloved was he by all who could become acquainted with him, that the apostolic pope himself, out of regard for the interests of this monastery, (in the foundation of which by Benedict he rejoiced,) consigned to him John, the abbot, and arch-chanter of the church of Rome, that he might conduct him from Rome into Britain; as you, beloved, well remember; in order that, by his means, the same monastery might receive the canonical custom of singing and ministering, according to the rite employed in the holy Roman and apostolic church. He left the houses and lands which he possessed, for Christ's sake, from whom he trusted that he would receive a portion of the ever-blooming paradise, and a house not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens. He left wife and children; not, indeed, that he literally had married a wife, and had children born unto him; but out of his love of chastity he refused to marry a wife by whom he might have children, choosing rather to belong to the number of those one hundred and forty-four thousand of the elect, who sing the new song before the throne of God and the Lamb, which no man but they can sing: "These are they which were not defiled with women; and they follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." [Rev. xiv. 4.] And he received an hundredfold, when, as he was journeying, not only in these lands, but also in foreign countries, many persons received him into their houses, desiring to supply him with the fruits of their lands; when many matrons tended the man of God with the same unwearying affection as they would

have exhibited towards their own husbands or parents; such was the regard in which they held his devout constancy of mind. He received an hundredfold houses and lands, when he obtained possession of these sites on which to build his monasteries. And had he left his wife for the sake of Christ, even this also would have been made up to him an hundredfold; because then the merit of the love of chastity in him, as among those who are continent on account of the fruit of the spirit, would have been an hundredfold greater than had he continued among those who formerly were wanton through the lust of the flesh. The sons which he did not care to have according to the flesh, these he was permitted to have an hundredfold according to the spirit (for the number one hundred,[1] as has often been said, figuratively represents perfection); for we are the children of this affectionate steward, since he brought us into this abode of monastic devotion; we are his sons, whom, though born after the flesh of many parents, he has spiritually knit together into one holy family by our profession; we are his sons, if we imitate his example by walking in the same path of virtue, and wander not, in our heedlessness, from that road which by his rule he taught us.

§ 3. For we well remember, brethren, we who can recollect him, how it has been frequently told, in the hearing of those whom God's mercy gathered into this our congregation after his death, that as long as he enjoyed bodily health, he never ceased to labour for the glory of God's holy church, and chiefly for the peace, honour, and quiet of this monastery; and how frequently soever he crossed the sea, he never (like too many) came home again empty-handed and unprofitable, but brought with him a large supply, at one time of holy books, at another, of the relics of the blessed martyrs of Christ,—a venerable gift! how he introduced, on one occasion, architects for the building of the church, on another, glass-manufacturers, for the ornament and security of its windows, on a third, instructors for teaching singing and the services of the church during the whole year; and further, how he brought home with him an epistle of privileges sent by the lord pope, by which our liberty should be protected from all external invasion. At one time he imported the paintings of the holy histories, which should serve not only for the ornamenting of the church, but for the instruction of the beholders; so that those persons who could not learn from books what had been done by our Lord and Saviour, might be thus far instructed by the representations placed around them.

§ 4. And all this studious toil he expended on these and kindred matters, for the end that no need for such like labour might devolve upon us; so frequently did he journey into foreign lands, that we, in our abundance of all the supplies of healthful knowledge, might be enabled to repose within the cloisters of our monastery, and in our

[1] Beda frequently spiritualises upon the allegorical meanings of numbers. See in Genes. Expositio, "Quod autem trecentorum cubitorum erat longitudo arcæ, centenarium numerum significat esse perfectum et plenum." Opp. iii. 33. Again, "Quia enim centenarius numerus est perfectus, ipse centum oves habuit." vii. 70. See also col. 234.

secure liberty to serve Christ the Lord. And even when he was severely chastened and afflicted by bodily infirmity, in the midst of his thanksgivings to God, it was a constant pleasure to him to speak upon our adherence to the monastic rules which he had learned and taught; and it pleased him to linger upon the remembrance of the ecclesiastical observances which he had noticed in various cities, but chiefly at Rome, and in the holy places which he recollected having visited in his youth. And thus supported and exercised by the long study of virtue, and purged by the lengthened martyrdom of a year of infirmity, after having received one hundredfold the gifts of grace during this present life, he passed to that which is eternal.

§ 5. And therefore, brethren, it is necessary that we, like good children, and worthy of such a father, be careful to follow his example and precept in all things, and that none of the snares of the spirit or flesh seduce us from walking in the steps of such a guide; but that we, who have left the affections of the flesh and an earthly inheritance,—who, out of love for the conversation of angels, have scorned to marry wives and to beget children after the flesh,—advancing in the virtues of the spirit, may be permitted to receive an hundredfold in the society of the saints in this life, and in the world to come to obtain the life which is eternal. And this by the grace of our Redeemer, who liveth and reigneth with the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

# THE CHRONICLE

OF

# THE VENERABLE PRESBYTER BEDA,

THE ANGLO-SAXON;

OR,

CONCERNING THE SIX AGES OF THE WORLD.

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In a former[1] part of this work, we briefly, in drawing a comparison between them and the week of the creation, glanced at the six ages of this world, and the seventh, or, as some maintain, the eighth, of a life of rest in heaven; and now again, in comparing them with a man's life, called in Greek by philosophers a *microcosm*, that is, a world in minature, we propose to dwell upon the same subject somewhat more at large.

The first age of this world, then, extends from Adam to Noe, and embraces, according to the Hebrew Scriptures, 1656, according to the Septuagint, 2242 years, and according to both versions ten generations. This age was put an end to by the universal deluge, just as the first age of man's life is wont to be sunk and lost in the waters of oblivion; for how few of us are there who can recollect our own infancy!

The second age, extending from Noe to Abraham, embraces, according to the authority of the Hebrew, ten generations, and 292 years; whereas the Septuagint version gives a longer period, and includes 1072 years, and eleven generations. This age may be called the childhood of God's people; and, accordingly, in it, language, that is, the Hebrew language, was invented. For in emerging from infancy, so named from infants not possessing the power of speech, into childhood, men first are capable of uttering significant sounds.

The third age extends from Abraham to David, and embraces, according to both authorities, fourteen generations, and 942 years. This may be termed the youth of God's people, because with this age man begins to possess the powers of generation: and, therefore, Matthew, the evangelist, commences his genealogy from Abraham, who, when his name was changed, was made the father of nations.

The fourth age extends from David to the carrying away into captivity to Babylon, and embraces, according to the Hebrew,

[1] Namely in chapter x. of his book "De Temporum Ratione," (ed. Giles, vi. 166,) from which the present treatise is an excerpt.

Scripture, 4 :ording to the Septuagint translation twelve more years, and, a ng to both versions, seventeen generations, which, for a myste ke, the evangelist Matthew numbers as fourteen. In this, wh y be called the age of the world's youth, kings began to rei ver God's people. For this is the period of man's life in w h he becomes fit for performing the function of government.

The fifth period resembles that of old age, and extends from the carrying away into Babylon, to the incarnation of our Lord the Saviour, through fourteen generations, and 589 years. In this the Hebrew people, as though borne down by the weight of old age, is broken by a rapid succession of evils.

The sixth age, in which we now live, is bounded by no fixed limits of generations, or of years; but, like decrepit old age, must meet its termination in the dissolution of the whole world; and, lastly, every one who has, by a happy death, triumphantly passed through the numberless cares and toils of these ages, is already received into the seventh age of an unbroken sabbath, and waits for the eighth age of the joyful resurrection, in which he may reign for ever with the Lord.

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## THE FIRST AGE.[1]

In the first age of the world, and on the first day of it, God made the light, which He called day. On the second day He suspended the firmament of heaven in the midst of the waters, which, with the earth, and the heaven above, and the powers that are therein, to glorify their Maker, had been created before the commencement of these six days. On the third day, He gathered the waters, which before had covered the whole face of the earth, into their place, and commanded the dry land to appear. On the fourth day, (which, as we conjecture from the equinox, is the 12th of the kalends of April) [21st March], He placed the stars in the firmament of heaven. On the fifth day, He created the fishes of the sea and the birds of the air. On the sixth day, (which I believe to be the 10th of the kalends of April) [23d March], He created the beasts of the field, and man himself, Adam, from whose side, as he slept, He produced Eve, the mother of all living.

From these considerations, in the absence of more convincing proof, the opinion of the blessed Theophilus,[2] which he enunciated in his disputation on Easter with the bishops of Palestine, and many of those of other countries, is worthy of credit, namely, that the crucifixion of our Lord took place on the same tenth day of the kalends of April [23d March]. For it was fitting that on one and

[1] It has been considered expedient to retain only the general outline of this and the following Ages up to the Sixth, and to omit the particulars which follow in the original.

[2] He was bishop of Cæsarea, in Palestine, and flourished about A.D. 192. See Cave, Hist. Lit. i. 87. He is mentioned by Eusebius, H. E. v. 23. There is a further notice of him in the present treatise, A.D. 194.

the same day, not only of the week, but also of the month, the second Adam, falling asleep in a death which was destined to give us life, should, by the heavenly sacraments produced from his side, sanctify to Himself the church as a bride, for the salvation of man; for on this day it was that He himself had created the first Adam, the father of mankind, and, by a rib taken from his side, built up for him a woman, by whose cooperation the human race might be propagated.

## THE SECOND AGE.

In the second age of the world, and on the first day of it, namely, on the 27th of the second month, Noah came out of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. To the mention of which event the blessed apostle Peter [1 Pet. iii. 21] in his epistle forthwith subjoins the following apt remark: "The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is on the right hand of God:" thereby teaching, that in the water of the deluge, baptism was figured; as also, in the ark and those whom it contained, the church and its saints, and in the number of eight souls, the mystery of our Lord's resurrection, in the faith of whom we are baptized.

## THE THIRD AGE.

The third age of the world commences with the nativity of the patriarch Abraham, who, when he was seventy-five years old, left his country, and came by the command of God to the land of Chanaan; receiving the double promise, that from his seed should be born a Saviour, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed, and that he himself should become a great nation; of which promises, the one is spiritual, the other temporal. In this period Ninus and Semiramis reigned over Assyria.

## THE FOURTH AGE.

The fourth age of the world opens not only with the rise of the Jewish kingdom, but also with the renewal of the promise formerly given to the patriarchs, and marks the commencement of the reign of Christ; the Lord swearing, "That of the fruit of his body, would He set upon his throne." [Ps. cxxxii. 11.]

## THE FIFTH AGE.

The fifth age commences with the carrying away of the Jews into captivity: the period of their expatriation lasting, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, seventy years.

## THE SIXTH AGE.

In the forty-second year of the reign of Augustus, the twenty-seventh from the death of Cleopatra and Antony, and the reduction of Egypt to a Roman province, the third of the 194th Olympiad, the 752d from the building of Rome, and in that year in which the firm arm of the emperor, having suppressed wars and tumults throughout the world, consolidated a real and lasting peace, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, sanctified the sixth age of this world by his advent. In the forty-seventh year of the reign of the emperor Augustus, Herod was attacked by dropsy; and his whole body being swarming with worms, he died in wretched, but not unmerited torments, and his son Archelaus, by the appointment of Augustus, reigned in his stead for nine years, up to the death of that emperor; for then it was that the Jews, impatient of a cruelty which had become intolerable to them, preferred a charge against him before the imperial throne, and obtained his banishment to Vienne, a city of Gaul; while, with the object of diminishing the power of the Jews, and curbing their spirit of insubordination, his four brothers, Herod, Antipater, Lysias, and Philippus, (of whom Philippus and Herod, who was before called Antipas, had been appointed during the lifetime of Archelaus), were created Tetrarchs in his place.

A.D. 38. Tiberius, the stepson of Augustus, that is to say, the son of his wife Livia by a former husband, reigned twenty-three years. In the twelfth year of his reign, Pilate was appointed by him procurator of Judæa, and, under this emperor, Herod the Tetrarch, who held the reins of government over the Jews twenty-four years, founded in honour of Tiberius and his mother Livia, Tiberias and Libias.

A.D. 30. In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, when, according to the Hebrews, as Eusebius signifies in his Chronicle, (for he notes that the sixteenth year of Tiberius was, according to the Hebrews, the commencement of the eighty-first jubilee,) 4,000 years from the beginning of the world had been completed, our Lord, after the baptism which John preached, announced the kingdom of heaven to the world; nor will any one, who has read the former part of this treatise, see any difficulty in our calculation, which places the date nineteen years earlier. Be this as it may, according to the same Chronicles, which Eusebius himself considered that he had compiled from both versions, there are 5,228 years.

A.D. 33. In the eighteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, our Lord redeemed the world by his passion, and the apostles, then about to preach the gospel through the regions of Judea, ordained James, the brother of our Lord, bishop of Jerusalem; they ordained also seven deacons, and, Stephen having been stoned to death, the church was dispersed through Judea and Samaria. Agrippa, surnamed Herod, the son of Aristobulus, the son of Herod the king, set out to Rome to accuse Herod the tetrarch, and being

thrown into prison by Tiberius, acquired the friendship of a great number of persons, and particularly of Gaius, the son of Germanicus.

A.D. 42. Gaius, surnamed Caligula, reigned three years, ten months, and eight days. This prince released his friend Herod Agrippa from prison, and made him king of Judea, in the enjoyment of which sovereignty he remained seven years, up to the fourth year of Claudius; and being struck by an angel, he was succeeded by his son Agrippa, whose reign lasted twenty-six years, up to the extermination of the Jews. Herod the tetrarch, with a view to conciliate to himself the friendship of Gaius, which Herod Agrippa had enjoyed, at the persuasion of Herodias, went to Rome; but, under a charge preferred against him by Agrippa, he also lost his tetrarchy, and having fled into Spain with Herodias, he there died of grief. Pilate, who had pronounced the sentence of condemnation against Christ, was, by the command of Gaius, subjected to a confinement so rigorous and painful that he put an end to his own life. Gaius, arrogating to himself a place among the gods, profaned the holy places of the Jews with the defilement of idols. Matthew preached in Judea, and wrote the gospel.

A.D. 56. Claudius reigned thirteen years, seven months, and twenty-eight days. Peter the apostle, the founder of the church of Antioch, set out for Rome, and there occupied the episcopal chair twenty-five years; that is to say, up to the last year of Nero. Mark, by the mission of Peter, preached in Egypt the gospel which he had written at Rome. In the fourth year of Claudius [1] there occurred a great famine, which Luke mentions, [Acts xi. 28,] and in the same year [2] the emperor in person started for Britain, which no one before Julius Cæsar, or after him, had dared to approach. There, by a peaceful and bloodless triumph, he, within a very few days, regained a great part of the island, added the Orkneys to the Roman empire, and on the sixth month after his departure returned to Rome. In the ninth year of his reign, the Jews raised a sedition in Rome, and were in consequence expelled, as Luke also mentions. [Acts xviii. 2.] In the following year, a grievous famine fell upon the city of Rome.

A.D. 70. Nero reigned thirteen years, seven months, and twenty-eight days. In his second year, Festus succeeded Felix as procurator of Judea, and by him Paul was sent in chains to Rome, whence, after two years' confinement to his own house, he was dismissed to preach the gospel; for Nero had not yet broken out into those enormous crimes which history relates of him. James, the brother of our Lord, after having governed the church of Jerusalem thirty years, was, in the seventh year of Nero, stoned to death by the Jews, who wreaked upon him the fatal vengeance which they were unable to execute upon Paul. In the government of Judea, Festus was succeeded by Albinus, Albinus by Florus; the riotous living and cupidity, and the other enormities, of the latter of whom, at length becoming intolerable to the Jews, they excited a rebellion against the Romans, to suppress which, Vespasian was sent in command of the forces, and took many of the cities of Judea. Nero, over

[1] See Eccl. Hist. I. iii. § 10. [2] Ibid.

and above his other crimes, was the first to persecute the Christians, and among the chief men of these at Rome, he crucified Peter, and beheaded Paul. This emperor, destitute as he was of all talent for military exploits, almost lost Britain;[1] for two of the most noble towns of his kingdom there were taken and overth own.

A.D. 80. Vespasian reigned nine years, eleven months, and twenty-two days. He, while in Judea, was proclaimed emperor by the army, and entrusting the prosecution of the war to the care of his son Titus, set out for Rome by way of Alexandria. This Titus, in the second year of his command, overthrew the kingdom of Judea, and razed the temple with the ground, 1,089 years from the date of its first building; so that the whole war was brought to a termination after four years, two during the life of Nero, and two after his death. Among the other great exploits of Vespasian before he became emperor, were those of his mission to Germany, and afterwards to Britain,[2] in which, after three engagements with the former, and two with the latter, he added two very powerful tribes, twenty towns, and the Isle of Wight, on the coast of Britain, to the Roman empire. A pillar was erected to his honour, in height 107 feet.

A.D. 82. Titus, a man so remarkable for every kind of virtue that he was called the love and delight of the human race, reigned two years and two months. This prince built the amphitheatre at Rome, and in its dedication slew 5,000 wild beasts.

A.D. 98. Domitian, the younger brother of Titus, reigned fifteen years and five months. He was the second, Nero having been the first, to persecute the Christians; and under him John the apostle was banished to the isle of Patmos, and Flavia Domitilla,[3] the niece of Flavius Clemens, the consul, by the sister of the emperor, exiled to the island of Pontia,[4] for bearing testimony to her faith. The story goes, too, that this emperor cast John himself into a cauldron of boiling oil, but that he escaped unharmed from the punishment, just as he had ever remained unstained by the corruption of the flesh.

A.D. 99. Nerva reigned one year, four months, and eight days. By his first edict, he recalled all exiles, and, under this general pardon, John the apostle regained his freedom, and returned to Ephesus. There, seeing that the faith of the church had suffered in his absence from the attacks of heretics, he at once confirmed it by setting forth in his gospel the eternity of the Word of God.

A.D. 118. Trajan reigned nineteen years, six months, and fifteen days. John the apostle, in the sixty-eighth year after the passion of our Lord, died in peace at Ephesus, in the ninety-eighth year of his age. In a persecution which Trajan set in motion against the Christians, Simeon, who is the same with Simon the son of Cleophas, bishop of Jerusalem, suffered crucifixion; and Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, was brought to Rome, and delivered to the

[1] Eccl. Hist. I. iii. § 11.

[2] Ibid.

[3] . . . "ex sorore neptis," Orig. There is some uncertainty as to the position of this Flavia Domitilla in the pedigree. See Anderson's Royal Genealogies, table cxxvii.

[4] Or Pontiana.

beasts. Alexander also, bishop of Rome, received the crown of martyrdom, and was buried at the seventh milestone from the city, on the Nurrentan Way, near the spot where he was beheaded. Pliny the younger, a native of Como, of whose talent many works are yet extant, acquired reputation as an orator and historian. The Pantheon, which Domitian had erected at Rome, so called from its being intended as the habitation of all the gods, was struck by lightning, and burnt. A well-merited and fatal vengeance prostrated the Jews, who were exciting seditions in various parts of the world. Trajan extended far and wide the boundaries of the Roman empire, which, since the time of Augustus, had been rather defended than nobly enlarged.

A.D. 139. Adrian, the son of Trajan's[1] mother's sister, reigned twenty-one years. This emperor, under the influence of Quadratus, a disciple of the apostles, of Aristides of Athens, a man abounding in faith and wisdom, and of Serenus Granius, the legate, and instructed by books which treated of the christian religion, ordered by a letter, that the Christians should not be condemned without some specific crimes being laid to their charge. He also put a finishing stroke to the extermination of the Jews, who had rebelled a second time, and even deprived them of the liberty to enter Jerusalem; which city he, by the construction of walls, restored to a condition of great strength, and commanded that it should be called Ælia, after his own name. He also, being a man of great learning in both Latin and Greek, built a library, an extraordinary work of art, at Athens. In this reign, Mark, the first of the gentiles who was ever appointed to this office, was made bishop of Jerusalem; the line of Jewish bishops, who were fifteen in number, and who presided over the church almost 107 years from our Lord's passion, having now come to an end.

A.D. 161. Antoninus, surnamed Pius, reigned in association with his sons Aurelius and Lucius twenty-two years and three months. In this reign Justin the philosopher presented to Antoninus his book which he had composed on behalf of the christian religion, and obtained his good will for the Christians. This Justin, not long after, in a persecution set in motion by Crescens, the cynic, shed his blood for Christ under Pius, bishop of Rome. Hermes wrote the book which is called the Shepherd, in which is contained the command of the angel that Easter should be celebrated on Sunday. Polycarp came to Rome, and cleansed from the stain of heresy many of those who had lately been corrupted by the doctrine of Valentinus and Cerdo.

A.D. 180. Marcus Antoninus Verus, associated with his brother Lucius Aurelius Commodus, reigned eighteen years and one month. The first exploit of these emperors,—who were the first to hold the reins of government with an equally divided authority, there having been up to this reign but one emperor at a time,—was a war with the Parthians, which they waged with admirable valour and success. In a persecution which had arisen in Asia, Polycarp and Pionius

[1] . . . "Consobrinæ Trajani filius," Orig. But this is not correct, if the words be understood strictly. See Anderson's Royal Genealogies, table cxxviii.

suffered martyrdom; and in Gaul not a few nobly shed their blood for Christ's sake. Nor were these crimes unavenged, for shortly afterwards a plague spread devastation over many provinces far and wide, and especially over Rome and Italy. Antoninus, upon the death of Commodus, his brother, made his son Commodus an associate of his throne. Melito the Asian, bishop of Sardis, presented to Antoninus the emperor a treatise in defence of the Christians. Lucius,[1] king of Britain, at his own request contained in a letter to Eleutherius, bishop of Rome, was made a Christian. Apollinaris of Asia, at Hierapolis, and Dionysius, at Corinth, were accounted bishops of note.

A.D. 193. Lucius Antoninus Commodus, after the death of his father, reigned thirteen years. This emperor waged a successful war against the Germans; but in every respect was the slave of lasciviousness and impurity, and did nothing worthy of being compared with his father's valour or piety. Irenæus occupied the episcopal chair at Lyons with distinction. Commodus, the emperor, removed the head of the colossus, and ordered that of his own statue to be substituted.

A.D. 194. Ælius Pertinax, after a reign of six months, was slain in his palace by the violence of Julian, the jurisconsult; who, in turn, in the seventh month from his assumption of the government, was defeated by Severus at the Milvian bridge, and put to death. In this reign, Victor, the thirteenth bishop of Rome, by circular letters very extensively published, appointed the celebration of Easter on Sunday; following therein the example of his predecessor Eleutherius, who appointed its celebration on that Sunday of the first month which fell between the fifteenth and twenty-first days of the moon inclusive. This decree was acquiesced in by Theophilus, bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine, who, in conjunction with all the other bishops who were present at that council, wrote an exceedingly useful synodical letter in refutation of those who, in accordance with the Jews, celebrate Easter on the fourteenth day of the moon.

A.D. 212. Severus Pertinax reigned eighteen years. In this reign Clemens, a presbyter of the church of Alexandria, and Pantænus, a stoic philosopher, in their disputation on the christian doctrine, were thought to have displayed a high degree of eloquence; while Narcissus, bishop of Jerusalem, Theophilus of Cæsarea, Polycarp, and Bachylus of the province of Asia, were all regarded as bishops of distinction. In a persecution of the Christians, a great number, among whom we may mention Leonides, the father of Origen, in the different provinces received the crown of martyrdom. After the assassination of Clodius Albinus, at Lyons, who had proclaimed himself emperor in Gaul,[2] Severus transferred the seat of war to Britain; and there, in order to secure his newly recovered provinces from the incursion of the barbarians, having drawn from sea to sea, for a length of 132,000 paces,[3] a broad ditch, with a thick rampart strongly fortified by a line of fortresses,

[1] See Eccl. Hist. I. iv. § 12.
[2] Ibid. I. v. § 13.
[3] Beda has here fallen into an error, by much overstating the length of the

placed on it at short intervals, died at York. Perpetua and Felicitas, in the camp near Carthage, in Africa, were given to the beasts, and suffered for Christ's sake on the nones of March.

A.D. 219. Antoninus, surnamed Caracalla, the son of Severus, reigned seven years. In this reign Alexander, bishop of Cappadocia, desirous of visiting the holy places, came to Jerusalem, and there, while Narcissus, bishop of that city, and a man of extreme old age, was yet living, was himself ordained as bishop, according to the command of the Lord contained in a revelation. The fame of Tertullian the African, the son of a proconsular centurion, disseminated itself through all the churches.

A.D. 220. Macrinus reigned one year; and, according to Africanus, Abgarus, a man of sanctity, at the same time, ruled in Edessa. This emperor, Macrinus, and his son Diadumenus, in conjunction with whom he had seized upon the throne, were assassinated at Archilas in a rebellion of the army.

A.D. 224. M. Aurelius Antoninus reigned four years. Julius Africanus, the historian of this period, and who had undertaken the care and superintendence of the work, founded Nicopolis in Palestine, a city which was before called Emmaus, and which, according to Luke, our Lord, after his resurrection, vouchsafed to sanctify by his presence. Hippolytus, a bishop, and the author of many treatises, brought down his canon of times to this date; and by his discovery of the cycle of sixteen years for the calculation of Easter, was the cause of Eusebius composing his cycle of nineteen years.

A.D. 237. Aurelius Alexander reigned thirteen years. His singular affection for his mother Mammea made him universally beloved. During this period, Urban, bishop of Rome, converted many of noble rank to the faith of Christ with such sincerity that they suffered martyrdom for Him: at the same time the fame of Origen was so loud throughout Alexandria, or rather throughout the whole world, that Mammea desired to hear him, invited him to Antioch, and entertained him with the highest distinction.

A.D. 240. Maximin reigned three years, and, incensed because the household of his predecessor Alexander and of his mother Mammea had embraced Christianity, or, perhaps, more especially, by hatred against Origen the presbyter, set in motion a persecution against the priests and clergy, that is, the teachers of the churches, in which Pontianus and Antherus, bishops of Rome, received the crown of martyrdom, and were buried in the cemetery of Calixtus.

A.D. 246. During the reign of Gordian, which lasted six years, Julius Africanus (who relates in his Chronicle that he repaired to Alexandria, attracted by the universal estimation in which Heraclas was held for erudition in theology and philosophy, and all the learning of the Greeks) was one of the most noted of the ecclesiastical writers of the period. At the same time Origen imbued

rampart. He was misled by his authors, whom he followed too closely, for his own local knowledge would have enabled him to have corrected their obvious miscalculations.

with the precepts of the divine philosophy Theodore, surnamed Gregory, and Athenodorus, two young brothers, who subsequently occupied with great distinction the episcopal chair of Pontus.

A.D. 253. Philippus, who shared the throne with his son of the same name for seven years, was the first of all the emperors to embrace Christianity, so that when the one thousandth year from the foundation of the city of Rome fell, as it did, in the third year of his reign, it remained for a christian emperor to celebrate this natal year—a year more august than any which had preceded—with magnificent public games. In this reign, also, Origen, who was so prolific an author that Jerome mentions having read six thousand of his compositions, wrote an answer in eight books to some attacks upon us by one Celsus, an epicurean philosopher.

A.D. 254. Decius, during a reign of one year and three months, actuated by hatred of his predecessors, the Philippi, the father and son, whom he had assassinated, set in motion a persecution against the Christians, in which Fabian, in Rome, received the noble crown of martyrdom, and devolved his bishopric upon Cornelius, who, in turn, met the same glorious death. This persecution, however, in which, in addition to those above mentioned, Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, at Cæsarea, in Palestine, and Babylas, bishop of Antioch, were massacred, did not owe its rise to the instigation of the emperor; but, to use the words of Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, to that of a minister of devils, called in this city of ours a soothsayer, who, a whole year before the publication of the edict of the emperor, was exciting the superstitious mob to attack us.

A.D. 256. Of Gallus, who with his son Volusian occupied the throne two years and four months, Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, has left us this account :—"But, notwithstanding these warnings, Gallus had not discernment to perceive, or to avoid, the fault which ruined Decius, but himself split upon the same rock of offence; for, although the opening of his reign was blessed with all prosperity and success, he did not refrain from persecuting those holy men, who were supplicating the most high God for the peace of his kingdom, and dispersing them, at the same time scattered to the winds the happiness and tranquillity of his own empire." Origen, a little before he had completed his 70th year, died and was buried in the city of Tyre. Cornelius, bishop of Rome, at the request of a certain matron, named Lucina, raised the bodies of the apostles from the catacombs in the night time, and deposited that of Paul at the spot where he was beheaded on the Via Hortiensis, and that of Peter near the place of his crucifixion, between the corpses of the holy bishops, in the temple of Apollo, on the Golden Mount, in the vatican of Nero's palace, on the 3d day of the kalends of July [29th June].

A.D. 271. The reign of Valerian and his son Gallienus, whom he associated with him in the empire, lasted fifteen years. A persecution of the Christians by the former, met with a speedy punishment in the defeat and capture of its author by Sapor, king of Persia, in which country his eyes were put out, and he himself languished away a prolonged life in miserable servitude. Terrified by his fate, and

regarding it as a manifest judgment of God, Gallienus restored peace to the church; but, either as a retribution for his own licentiousness, or his father's enmity to God, the Roman empire suffered a long series of disasters from the attacks of the barbarians. In this persecution, Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, of whom some works of very great learning are yet extant, and of whose life and passion Pontius, his deacon and companion in his exile and death, has left an admirable account, received the crown of martyrdom. At the same time, Theodore, of whom I have before made mention, surnamed Gregory, bishop of Neocæsarea in Pontus, was distinguished by every excellence; and he it was who, in order to provide sufficient space for building a church, moved a mountain by his prayers. Stephanus and Xistus, bishops of Rome, were martyred.

A.D. 273. Claudius, who reigned one year and nine months, was remarkable for his signal victories over the Goths, who had for fifteen years been devastating Illyricum and Macedonia, and for these exploits was honoured by the dedication of a shield of gold in the senate-house, and of a golden statue in the capitol. Malchion, a presbyter of the church of Antioch, and of great eloquence, as might be expected from one who had been a teacher of rhetoric in that city, held a disputation with Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch, who maintained that Christ was a mere man of a common nature. This dialogue[1] was taken down by short-hand writers at the time, and is yet extant.

A.D. 278. Aurelian, who reigned five years and six months, having set in motion a persecution against us, was threatened by the falling of a thunderbolt immediately before him, to the great terror of the bystanders; and, accordingly, not long after, in the middle of the march between Constantinople and Heraclea, at that part of the old paved way which is called Cænofrurium, he met his death by the hands of the soldiers. Eutychian, bishop of Rome, received the crown of martyrdom, and he, who had buried with his own hand 313 martyrs, now lies in the cemetery of Callistus.

A.D. 279. Tacitus reigned six months, and, after his assassination at Pontus, Florian occupied the throne eighty-eight days, and was, in turn, put to death at Tharsus. During this reign, Anatolius, an Alexandrian by birth, bishop of Laodicea in Syria, and skilled in the learning of the philosophers, was widely celebrated; the greatness of his talent is attested by his work on Easter, and his ten books on Arithmetic.

A.D. 285. The great achievement of Probus, who occupied the imperial throne six years and four months, was the complete deliverance of Gaul from, and the extirpation of, the barbarians, who had for many years oppressed that country, after a series of desperate battles. In the second year of his reign, and, as Eusebius in his Chronicle says, according to the Antiochians, the 325th year; according to the Tyrians, the 402d; according to the Laodiceans, the 324th; according to the Edessenes, the 588th; according to the Ascalonites, the 380th; and according to the Hebrews, the begin-

[1] See Cave, i. 135. It was extant in the time of Jerome, from whom Beda has copied this passage, but is now lost.

ning of the 86th Jubilee, that is to say, in the 4250th year of the world, there arose, to the great misfortune of the whole human race, the insane heresy of the Manichæans; and Archelaus, bishop of Mesopotamia, wrote a treatise in the Syrian language containing his disputation with Manichæus, on his departure from Persia; which treatise was translated into Greek, and very generally read.

A.D. 287. Carus, with his sons Carinus and Numerianus, reigned two years. This was the period of the flourishing of Gaius, a distinguished bishop of the Roman church, who suffered martyrdom under Diocletian, and of Pierius, a presbyter of Alexandria, who taught with great success under Theon, the bishop, and who displayed so nice an elegance in his language, and in his various treatises, which are still extant, as to acquire the title of Origen the second. In other respects, he was a man of extraordinary parsimony, and, after the persecution, passed his life in voluntary poverty at Rome.

A.D. 307. Diocletian,[1] with Herculius Maximian, reigned twenty years. In Britain, Carausius assumed, with the imperial purple, the sovereignty of the island. In the East, peace was disturbed by Narseus, king of Persia. In Africa, the Quinquegentiani continued their devastations, while the occupation of Egypt by Achilleus seemed an emergency sufficient to demand the efforts of Constantius and Galerius Maximian, and their association as Cæsars in the empire. Of these, Constantius married Theodora, the stepdaughter of Herculius, by whom he had six sons, the brothers of Constantine; and Galerius, Valeria, the daughter of Diocletian. Ten years afterwards, Britain was recovered by Asclepiodotus, the prætorian prefect.

In the nineteenth year of Diocletian, that emperor, in the East, and Maximian Herculius in the West, issued an edict for the devastation of the churches, and the persecution and execution of the Christians; and although, in the second year of this persecution, Diocletian laid aside the imperial purple at Nicomedia, and Maximian at Milan, yet the persecution, once set in motion, ceased not to rage till the seventh year of Constantine. In the sixteenth year of this emperor, Constantius,[2] a man of courteous manners and humane disposition, died in Britain at York. This persecution blazed with such violent and uninterrupted fury, that in one month 17,000 martyrs suffered for Christ's sake; nor could [3] even the ocean stay its career, for it crossed the sea which girds Britain, and condemned Alban, Aaron, Julius, with a host of others of both sexes, to a violent but happy death. In it, also, Pamphilus, a presbyter, the friend of Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea, whose life he has composed in three books, suffered martyrdom.

A.D. 308. In the third year of the persecution, being also that of the death of Constantius, Maximin and Severus were appointed Cæsars by Galerius Maximian; of whom Maximin filled up the measure of his abominable crimes and adulteries, by his persecution of the Christians. In this reign, Peter, bishop of Alexandria, with

[1] See Eccl. Hist. I. vi. §§ 14, 15.
[2] Ibid I. viii. § 23.
[3] Ibid. I. vii. § 16.

many other bishops of Egypt, Lucian, a presbyter of Antioch, a man remarkable for his morals, his continence and learning, and Timotheus, on the 10th of the kalends of July [22d June], at Rome, all suffered martyrdom.

A.D. 339. Constantine,[1] the son of Constantius by his concubine Helena, was proclaimed emperor in Britain, and reigned thirty years and ten months. In the fourth year of the persecution, Maxentius, the son of Herculius Maximian, assumed the title of Augustus, while Licinius, the husband of Constantia, the sister of Constantine, was proclaimed emperor at Carnuntum; and Constantine from a persecutor of, becomes a convert to, Christianity. In the 636th year after Alexander, on the 19th day of the month Desius, according to the Greeks, that is, the 13th day of the kalends of July [19th June], in the consulate of Paulinus and Julian, men of great eminence, the catholic faith was expounded at the council of Nice.

Among the basilicæ which Constantine built, was one at Rome, where he received the rite of baptism, dedicated to St. John the Baptist, called the basilica of Constantine; also one to St. Peter in the temple of Apollo; also one to St. Paul; the bodies of which two latter apostles he enveloped in a case of Cyprian brass five feet thick; also a basilica named Jerusalem, in the Sessorian palace, where he placed a portion of the wood of our Lord's cross; also one to the holy martyr Agnes, at the request of his daughter, and a baptistery in the same place, where his sister Constantia and her daughter Augusta were baptized; also one to the blessed martyr Laurence on the Tiburtine Way in the Veran territory; also one to St. Peter and Marcellinus, martyrs, on the Lavican Way, between two laurels; and besides these he erected a mausoleum, to which he removed the body of his mother, and laid it in a purple sarcophagus. He also built a basilica in the city of Hostia, near the harbour of Rome, to the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and to John the Baptist; and one in the city of Alba to St. John the Baptist, and one in the city of Naples. Moreover he, in honour of the martyr Lucian, who lay buried there, restored Drepana, a city of Bithynia, and named it Helenopolis, after his mother; and then, having built in Thrace a city bearing his own name, he established it as the capital of the Roman empire, and of the whole east. Lastly, this emperor, without the shedding of a drop of blood, issued an edict for the closing of the pagan temples.

A.D. 363. Constantius reigned, associated with his brothers Constantine and Constans, twenty-four years, five months, and thirteen days. James was acknowledged bishop of Nisibis, and, at his prayers, that city several times was delivered from the dangers that threatened it. The abettors of the Arian impiety, supported and patronised by Constantius, by banishment, bonds, and every mode of tribulation, persecuted first of all Athanasius, and after him all the bishops who failed to espouse their tenets. Maximin, by whom Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, in his flight from the menaces of Constantius, was received with honour and protected,

[1] See Eccl. Hist. I. viii. § 23.

was distinguished as the bishop of Treves. Antonius, a monk, died a hermit in the one hundred and fifth year of his age. The mortal remains of the apostle Timothy were transferred to Constantinople, and, on the approach of Constantius to Rome,[1] the bones of Andrew the apostle, and of Luke the evangelist, were received with great reverence by the inhabitants of Constantinople. Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, having been compelled by the Arians to go into exile in Phrygia, passed to Constantinople, and, after having presented the book containing his defence to the emperor Constantius, returned to Gaul.

A.D. 365. Julian, who reigned two years and eight months, became a convert to idolatry, and instituted a persecution against the Christians ; while, at the same time, the pagans of Sebaste, a city of Palestine, broke open the sepulchre of John the baptist, dispersed his bones, and again collecting them and reducing them to ashes, scattered them more completely to the winds. However, by the providence of God, certain monks were at hand, who, mingling with the crowd of pagans who were collecting them, took up all that they could find, and conveyed them safely to their abbot Philip ; who forthwith, considering such a treasure as too important to be entrusted to his custody, sent them by the hands of Julian, a deacon, to Athanasius, the then primate. By him they were received in the presence of but a few witnesses, and excavating a part of the wall of the sacristy, he concealed them there, prophetically divining that their preservation would benefit the succeeding generation. Nor was his presage unfulfilled; for Theophilus, bishop of the same city, under the emperor Theodosius, destroyed the tomb of Serapis, and consecrated in its place a church to St. John.

A.D. 366. Jovian reigned eight months. In this reign a synod, convened at Antioch by Meletius and those of his party, rejected the terms '*Homousion*,' and '*Anomoion*,' and established the intermediate Macedonian doctrine of the '*Homoiousion* ;' while the emperor, warned by the fall of his predecessor, Constantius, in a letter of great respect, recalled Athanasius, and adopted from him a formulary of faith, and his method of regulating the churches. Unfortunately, a reign of such promise and piety was cut short by an early death.

A.D. 377. Valentinian, associated with his brother, Valens, reigned eleven years. Apollinaris, bishop of Laodicea, composed several treatises on the christian religion, but afterwards, deviating from the faith, originated the heresy which bears his name. Damasus, bishop of Rome, built a basilica in honour of St. Laurence, near the theatre, and another upon the catacombs, in which latter church reposed the bodies of the apostles Peter and Paul ; and on this spot he embellished the slab under which they were deposited with some verses. Valens, having received baptism from Eudoxius, an Arian bishop, persecuted the Catholics. Gratian, the son of Valentinian, in the third year of his reign, was pro-

[1] By Rome, the city of New Rome, or Constantinople, is meant. See Hieron. De Scrip. Eccl. under the title of St. Luke, Baronius, A.D. 358, § 27.

claimed emperor at Amiens. At Constantinople, the church [1] of the apostles was dedicated. After the death of Auxentius, at an advanced age, Ambrose was appointed bishop of Milan, and the whole of Italy was converted to the orthodox faith. Bishop Hilary died at Poitiers.

A.D. 381. Valens, in association with Gratian and Valentinian, the sons of his brother Valentinian, reigned four years. This emperor enacted a law that monks should be subject to military service, the punishment of refusal being, to be beaten to death with staves. In this reign the nation of the Huns, which had long been confined within inaccessible mountains, inflamed by a sudden madness, burst forth against the Goths, put them completely to the rout, and drove them from their ancient settlements; the Goths then passed the Danube, and were received into the empire by Valens, without the necessity of delivering up their arms; there, driven by the rapacious avarice of Maximus and by famine to rebel, they defeated the army of Valens, and dispersing themselves over Thrace, spread throughout the whole country massacre, conflagration, and rapine

A.D. 387. Gratian, associated with his brother Valentinian, reigned six years, during which period Theodosius, being proclaimed emperor by him, gained many signal victories over those vast Scythian nations, the Alans, Huns, and Goths, and was the cause of the resignation by the Arians, (to whom his subsequent reconciliation with those tribes was intolerable,) of the churches which they had occupied by force for forty years. A synod, attended by 150 bishops, was convened in the Royal City [of Constantinople], under Damasus, bishop of Rome, to condemn the heresy of Macedonius. Theodosius, in turn, associated with himself in the empire his son Arcadius. In the second year of Gratian, when that emperor and Theodosius (the former for the fifth time) were consuls, Theophilus composed the computation for the celebration of Easter. In Britain,[2] Maximus, a man of determined courage, high probity, and altogether worthy to bear the title of Augustus, (except inasmuch as his usurpation was a violation of his oath of allegiance,) was proclaimed emperor by the army, almost without his own consent. From Britain he crossed over to Gaul, circumvented Gratian by a stratagem, put him to death at Lyons, and finally drove his brother Valentinian out of Italy. Nor was the banishment of the latter and his mother Justina undeserved, for he himself was polluted by the Arian heresy, and had, with such perfidity and obstinacy, besieged and persecuted that bulwark of the catholic faith, the illustrious Ambrose, that it was only on the production of the bodies of the blessed martyrs Gervase and Protase uncorrupted and entire, (by God's revelation,) that he desisted from his nefarious undertaking.

A.D. 398. Theodosius, who, in the lifetime of Gratian, had administered the East for six years, reigned after his death eleven years. This emperor,[3] in co-operation with Valentinian, whom, on

[1] . . . "Apostolorum Martyrium." See Bingham, VIII. i. § 8.
[2] Eccl. Hist. I. ix. § 24. [3] Ibid.

his expulsion from Italy, he had received and protected, succeeded in putting the tyrant Maximus to death at the third milestone from Aquileia. The result of the enterprise of this tyrant was disastrous to Britain;[1] for those very warlike transmarine tribes, the Scots on the north-west, and the Picts on the north, observing the very general withdrawal of the armed youth, and the military forces, (which had followed the fortunes of the usurper into Gaul and never returned home,) invaded and pillaged the island while thus destitute of an army to defend it, and continued their oppression through many years. Jerome, the translator of the Sacred History, brought down his work, "On the illustrous men of the church," to the fourteenth year of the whole reign of Theodosius.

A.D. 411. Arcadius, the son of Theodosius, reigned associated with his brother Honorius thirteen years. In this reign, the bodies of the holy prophets Habakkuk and Micah were discovered by a divine prophetic revelation. The Goths invaded Italy; the Vandals and Alans, Gaul. Innocent, bishop of Rome, built and dedicated a basilica to the holy martyrs Gervase and Protase, from the proceeds of a testamentary bequest of a certain illustrious woman, named Vestina. Pelagius,[2] a native of Britain, impugned the grace of God.

A.D. 426. Honorius, associated with Theodosius the younger, his brother's son, reigned fifteen years. In this reign, on the ninth day of the kalends of September [24th Aug.], and in the 1164th year from its foundation, Alaric, king of the Goths, seized upon Rome,[3] reduced a part of it to ashes, exhausted it of plunder, and departed on the sixth day after his entry. Lucian, a presbyter, to whom God, in the seventh year of the reign of the emperor Honorius, revealed the place of the sepulchre and of the remains of the blessed protomartyr Stephen, of Gamaliel, and of Nicodemus, mentioned in the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, communicated this revelation in a letter, in Greek, to the representative[4] of all the churches; and it was, by Avitus, a presbyter, of Spanish extraction, translated into Latin, and, with the addition of an epistle by himself, sent by the hands of Orosius, a presbyter, —who had arrived at the holy place on a mission by Augustine, to consult Jerome on the condition of the soul,—to the churches of the West. From whence, also, Orosius received the remains of the blessed Stephen, and returning to his country, was the first to bring them into the West. At this time, the Britons, harassed beyond endurance by the irruptions of the Scots and Picts,[5] sent to Rome, earnestly prayed for succour, and held out the submission of the island as the price. Their request was granted, and a Roman legion having been sent, rapidly put to rout a vast multitude of the barbarians, expelled the rest from the country of Britain, and before their departure gave them the friendly advice to build a wall across the island, between the two seas, and thus keep off their

[1] Eccl. Hist. I. xii. § 28. [2] Ibid. I. x. § 25. [3] Ibid. I. xi. § 26.
[4] See Photius, cod. 171, for some fragments of the Greek; and Baronius, A.D. 415, § 7, for the Latin version. By the "representative of all the churches" Beda here understands the patriarch of Jerusalem, to whom the epistle was addressed. [5] Eccl. Hist. I. xii. § 28.

enemies. This wall was rendered useless by their want of skill, in building it of turf, rather than of stone; for no sooner had the Romans departed, than their ancient foes, invading them from the side of the sea, mowed down, trampled under foot, and consumed, like ripe corn, everything that stood in their way. A second time the Romans answered to their prayers, and hastening to their aid, drove the enemy, after great slaughter, beyond the seas, and, in conjunction with the Britons, built from sea to sea a wall, not of earth and dust, as before, but of solid stone, between those cities which dread of those hostile tribes had caused them to erect there. Beyond this, on the south coast, on which side invasion was feared, they built at intervals towers overlooking the sea; and then bade their allies a last farewell, like men who intend never to return.

Boniface, bishop of Rome, built an oratory in the cemetery of St. Felicitas, and added some embellishments to her sepulchre and to that of St. Sylvanus. Jerome, a presbyter, died, in the twelfth year of Honorius, the day before the kalends of October [30th Sept.], in the ninety-first year of his age.

A.D. 452. Theodosius the younger, the son of Arcadius, reigned twenty-six years; Valentinian the second, the son of Constantius, was proclaimed emperor at Ravenna, and his mother, Placidia, was saluted with the title of Augusta. In this reign, the savage tribes of the Vandals, Alans, and Goths, crossing over from Spain to Africa, spread throughout the country devastation by fire, by the sword, by rapine, and by the pollution of the Arian impiety; but then it was that the blessed Augustine, bishop of Hippo, and a renowned teacher of all the churches, shrinking from beholding the ruin of his city, in the third month of its siege, and on the fifth day of the kalends of September [28th Aug.], passed away to the Lord, at a time when the Vandals had taken Carthage and ravaged Sicily. He died at the age of eighty-six years, almost forty of them having been spent in the clerical or episcopal office; and some account of his captivity is to be found in the epistle which Paschasinus[1] of Lilybæum[2] wrote to pope Leo on the computation of Easter.

Palladius,[3] ordained by pope Celestinus, was the first to be sent as a bishop over the Scots who had embraced Christianity. Upon the withdrawal of the Roman army, and the announcement of their determination not to return becoming known, the Scots and Picts again occupied, to the exclusion of its native inhabitants, the whole of the island on the north of, and up to, the very wall; and at one blow massacred, took captive, and put to flight its defenders. A breach was made in it, and the band of cruel robbers spread their ravages on this side; upon which, in the twenty-third year of Theodosius, an epistle was sent to Ætius,[4] a man of influence at Rome, and consul for the third time, praying for aid, but without success. Meanwhile,[5] the fugitives were harassed by a dreadful famine, and one famous in the annals of history, under the com-

[1] See Cave, Hist. Lit. ad an. 443, i. 435.
[2] In Sicily.
[3] Eccl. Hist. I. xiii. § 32; V. xxiv. § 452.
[4] Ibid. I. xii. § 31.
[5] Ibid. I. xiv. § 33.

pulsion of which some surrendered to the enemy; while others, retiring to the mountains, caves, and defiles, made repeated excursions with determined courage, and inflicted severe losses on the enemy. The Scots then returned home for the present, while the Picts occupied the extremity of the island, with the intention of retaining it as their settled habitation. This famine was succeeded[1] by a season of great abundance; the abundance by the most extravagant habits of luxury and heedlessness; and this by a very terrible pestilence, and a still more terrible scourge, in the shape of a new body of enemies, the Angli, whom Uurtigern, following the unanimous counsel of the Britons, had invited to defend the country, but perceived, when too late, that, instead of defenders, he had entertained assailants and conquerors. Xistus, bishop of Rome, erected to St. Mary, the mother of our Lord, a basilica, called by the ancients the temple of Bacchus. Eudoxia, the wife of the emperor Theodosius, returned from Jerusalem, bringing with her the remains of the most blessed Stephen, the protomartyr, which are now deposited in the basilica of St. Lawrence, and are a peculiar object of reverence. Blædla and Attila, two brothers, and kings of many nations, ravaged Illyricum and Thrace.

A.D. 459. Martian and Valentinian reigned seven years. The nation of the Angli or Saxones landed[2] in Britain with three long ships; but on the announcement in their own country of their prosperous voyage, a more powerful army was sent, which, in conjunction with the former, in the first place repulsed the enemy by whom they were attacked, and then, under the pretence that the Britons did not give them sufficient pay for their military services, turned their arms against their allies, and devastated nearly the whole island, from east to west, with fire and sword. John the Baptist revealed to two eastern monks, who had gone to Jerusalem to perform their orisons there, the place where his head was deposited, near the former palace of Herod the king; and it was forthwith conveyed to Emisa, a city of Phœnicia, and worthily and reverently adored. At this time,[3] the Pelagian heresy shook the faith of the Britons, who in their difficulty sought the aid of the Gallican bishops; and received, as the defenders of the faith, Germanus, bishop of Auxerre, and Lupus, bishop of Treves, joint supporters of the doctrine of apostolic grace. These confirmed their wavering faith by the Word of God and by miracles; and not only this,[4] but in a battle between the Picts and Scots on the one side, and the Britons on the other, Germanus took the command, and, not with the blast of the trumpet, but with one universal shout of Alleluia rising to heaven from the whole army, put his savage foes to the rout, and, by the divine power, suppressed the war which was then raging between those nations. He afterwards went to Ravenna, and, in high honour with Valentinian and Placidia, passed away to Christ. His body was conveyed to Auxerre with a splendid retinue, and was attended with the performance of miracles. Ætius the patrician, the support of the

[1] Eccl. Hist. I. xiv. § 34.
[2] Ibid. I. xv. § 35.
[3] Ibid. I xvii. § 39.
[4] Ibid. I. xx. § 45.

Western Republic, and formerly the dread of king Attila, was put to death by Valentinian; and with him fell the Empire of the West, which has never yet been resuscitated.

A.D. 476. Leo reigned seventeen years. This emperor sent circular letters, all speaking the same language, in favour of the canons of the council of Chalcedon, to each of the orthodox bishops throughout the whole world, begging that they would in return forward an expression of their sentiments on the same subject; and from them he received answers as to the incarnation of Christ, couched in so nearly the same terms that they might have passed for the expression of a single opinion dictated at one time by one individual. Theodoret, bishop of the city founded by Cyrus, king of the Persians, which bears his name, wrote against Eutyches, and Dioscorus, bishop of Alexandria, who denied the humanity of Christ, a treatise on the true incarnation of our Saviour, and continued the ecclesiastical history of Eusebius down to his own time, that is to say, as far as the reign of this Leo, under whom he died. Victorius, by the command of pope Hilary, composed a paschal cycle of 532 years.

A.D. 493. Zeno reigned seventeen years. The body of Barnabas, the apostle, and the gospel of Matthew, written by his own hand, were discovered by a revelation made by himself. Odoacer, king of the Goths, seized upon Rome, and thenceforward monarchs of his race held it for a considerable period. Upon the death of Theodoric, son of Triarius, another Theodoric, surnamed Valamer, was invested with the sovereignty of the Goths, devastated the provinces of Macedonia and Thessaly, set the royal city in flames in various places, and occupied Italy with his hostile forces. In Africa, Honoric, king of the Vandals, an Arian, having driven into exile and dispersed more than 334 catholic bishops, closed their churches, inflicted on the people a variety of tortures, by amputating their hands and cutting out their tongues; but notwithstanding this, was unable to silence their expression of the catholic faith. In Britain,[1] the people of that island, under the conduct of Ambrosius Aurelius, a man of humanity and moderation, and the only Roman who had the fortune to survive the defeat by the Saxons, in which his parents, who were of the imperial family, perished, challenged the dominant race to battle, and were victorious. From that time, victory inclined, now to one side, now to the other, until a more powerful foreign foe obtained possession of the whole length and breadth of the island.

A.D. 521. Anastasius reigned twenty-eight years. Thrasamund, king of the Vandals, caused the catholic churches to be closed, and sent 220 bishops into exile in Sardinia. Pope Symmachus not only built a number of new churches and restored others from decay, but erected almshouses in honour of St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. Laurence; and sent to the exiled bishops in Africa and Sardinia, annual presents of money and clothes. The divine vengeance fell upon Anastasius, in consequence of his favouring the

[1] See Eccl. Hist. l. xvi. § 38.

heresy of Eutyches and persecuting the catholics, and he perished by the stroke of a thunderbolt.

A.D. 529. Justin the elder reigned eight years. In this reign John, the pontiff of the Roman church, came to Constantinople, and at the Golden-gate, as it is called, in the presence of a large concourse of people, answered the prayer of a blind man and restored him to sight. He then returned to Ravenna, where he was thrown into prison by Theodoric, to whom he had become an object of envy in consequence of his honourable reception by Justin, the defender of the catholic faith, and, under the severity of the confinement, perished. In this year, that is, in the consulate of Probus the younger, that tyrant had also put to death the patrician Symmachus, at Ravenna; and he himself in the following year died suddenly in the same town, and was succeeded by his grandson, Athalaric. Hilderic, king of the Vandals, gave orders for the return of the bishops from exile, and for the restoration of the churches, after they had been profaned by heretics for seventy-four years. At this time the fame of the virtues of abbot Benedict, which the blessed pope Gregory has described in his Book of Dialogues, was spread far and wide.

A.D. 567. Justinian, the son of the sister of Justin, reigned thirty-eight years. By this emperor, Belisarius the patrician was sent to Africa, and exterminated the Vandals with such success that, by the defeat and expulsion of that nation and its king Gelismer, who was sent captive to Constantinople, Carthage, in the ninety-sixth year after its loss, was recovered. The body of St. Antony, the monk, was discovered by a divine revelation, carried to Alexandria, and there buried in the church of St. John the Baptist. Dionysius composed the paschal cycles, beginning from the 532d year of our Lord's incarnation, that is, the 248th year of Diocletian, and the one following the consulate of Lampadius and Orestes, in which also the code of Justinian was published to the world. In addition to Dionysius, Victor, bishop of Capua, in a book on Easter, refuted the errors of Victorius.

A.D. 587. Justin the younger reigned eleven years. Narses the patrician overthrew and put to the sword Totila, king of the Goths, in Italy; but afterwards, incurring the envy of the Romans, in behalf of whom all his efforts had been directed against the Goths, and having been made the subject of a charge of having oppressed the Italians with services, before Justin and his wife Sophia, he retired to Naples, in Campania, and sent to the Lombards an invitation to come and take possession of the country of Italy. John, pontiff of the Roman church, completed and dedicated the church of the apostles Philip and James, which his predecessor Pelagius had commenced.

A.D. 585. Tiberius Constantine reigned seven years. In this reign[1] Gregory, then respondent at Constantinople, but afterwards bishop of Rome, composed the exposition upon Job, and refuted, in the presence of Tiberius, the error of Eutychius, bishop of the same city, respecting the faith of the resurrection; and so com-

[1] See Eccl. Hist. II. i. §§ 83, 84.

pletely did he succeed, that the emperor, fortified also by catholic arguments of his own, was of opinion that his book on the Resurrection ought to have been committed to the flames. The error of Eutychius was this, that he maintained that our body in the glorious resurrection would be impalpable, and of a more subtle nature than the winds and the air, contrary to the words of our Lord, "Touch me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." [Luke xxiv. 39.] The Lombards, under their king Albuin, with famine, death, and rapine in their train, swept the whole of Italy, and laid siege to the city of Rome.

A.D. 606. Maurice reigned twenty-one years. Herminigild, the son of Levigild, king of the Goths, whose firm profession of the catholic faith cost him, at the hands of his father, who was an Arian, his royal privileges and liberty, at last, on the holy night of our Lord's resurrection, was beheaded, and receiving a heavenly instead of an earthly crown, died a king and a martyr. His brother Richard, however, on succeeding to his father's kingdom, at the instance of Leander, bishop of Seville, the instructor of Herminigild, converted the entire nation of the Goths to the catholic faith. Gregory,[1] pontiff of the church of Rome, and a teacher of great learning, in the thirteenth year of the reign of Maurice, and the thirteenth indiction, convened a synod of twenty-four bishops, at the place where the blessed apostle Peter was buried, and made decrees about the necessary affairs of the church. Under this pontiff, also, Augustine, Melitus, and John, accompanied by many other God-fearing monks, were sent to Britain, and converted the Angles to Christianity; and not only this, but Aedilberct, king of the Cantuarii, having, together with his own subjects and the people of the neighbouring provinces, become a convert to that religion, presented his bishop and teacher, Augustine, and the rest of the holy priests, with an episcopal see; but beyond this, the nations of the Angles of Northumbria, who were under the rule of Aelle and Aedilfrid, had not yet heard the word of God. Gregory[2] also, in the nineteenth year of Maurice, the fourth indiction, in a letter to Augustine, signified that there should be metropolitan bishops, who should receive the pall from the apostolic see, at London and York.

A.D. 614. Phocas reigned eight years, in the second of which, the eighth indiction, pope Gregory[3] passed away to the Lord. This emperor, at the instance of pope Boniface, decreed that the seat of the Roman and apostolic church should be the head of all the churches; a decree that was rendered necessary by the church of Constantinople maintaining that she was the head of all the churches. He also, on the petition of another pope Boniface, issued an order that the old temple of the Pantheon[4] should be cleansed of the pollution of the idolatrous worship, and that it should be consecrated as a church to the ever-blessed Virgin Mary, and all the martyrs; so that the spot, which had been the scene of the adoration, not of gods, but of devils, might thenceforward become a church dedicated to the memorial of all the saints.

[1] Eccl. Hist. I. xxiii. § 51; II. i. § 90.
[2] Ibid. I. xxix. § 73.
[3] Ibid. II. i. § 81.
[4] Ibid. II. iv. § 99.

In this reign, the state suffered severe wars from the Persians; many Roman provinces, and Jerusalem itself, were lost; the churches were destroyed; everything that was holy was desecrated; places sacred and profane were plundered of their ornaments, and even the cross of our Lord, the banner of our faith, was removed.

A.D. 640. The reign of Heraclius lasted twenty-six years, and in it Anastasius, a Persian monk, suffered a glorious martyrdom for Christ's sake. This monk was born in Persia, and in his boyhood was instructed by his father in the arts of magic. Afterwards, learning from some captive Christians the name of Christ, he became a most zealous convert, left Persia, and, seeking Christ, went to Chalcedonia, Hierapolis, and, at last, to Jerusalem. In that place he received the grace of baptism, and, entering the monastery of the abbot Anastasius, four miles from the city, he lived a member of that order for seven years, when he was taken prisoner at Cæsarea, in Palestine, whither he had gone to perform his orisons, by the Persians, was thrown into chains by the order of the judge Marzabanes, and severely scourged. Thence he was sent to the court of Chosroes, king of Persia, by whom he was scourged three several times, and at last was suspended by one hand for three hours, and in this position was beheaded, and suffered martyrdom, with seventy others. After his death a demoniac was cured by putting on his robe. Meanwhile the emperor Heraclius interposed, with an army, overthrew the Persians, and restored in joy the captive Christians to their homes. The remains of the blessed martyr Anastasius were first of all conveyed to his monastery, but subsequently to Rome, where they were deposited in the monastery of the blessed apostle Paul, "ad Aquas Salvias," as it is called, and are an especial object of reverence.

In the sixteenth year of Heraclius,[1] the fifteenth indiction, Aeduuin, king of the Angles in Britain and of Northumbria, and a most excellent prince, convinced by the preaching of bishop Paulinus, whom the venerable archbishop Justus had sent from Kent, adopted, together with his people, the word of salvation, in the eleventh year of his reign, and about 180 years after the arrival of the Angles in Britain; and he appointed Paulinus bishop of the see of York. It was remarkable that, as a presage of the reception of this king into a heavenly kingdom, by his adoption of the faith, the power of his temporal kingdom had grown to an extent unexampled by any monarch of the Angles, embracing, as it did, all the provinces of Britain, whether inhabited by Angles or Britons, to its furthest borders. At that time,[2] pope Honorius refuted, in a letter, the error of the Quartodecimans in the observing of Easter, which had arisen among the Scots; and John also, who succeeded Severinus, the successor of Honorius, having been elected to the pontificate, wrote to them, urging similar arguments on the subject of Easter, and against the Pelagian heresy, which was revived amongst them.

A.D. 642. Heraclonas, with his mother Martina, reigned two years. In this reign, Cyrus, bishop of Alexandria, Sergius and Pyrrhus, bishops of the royal city, maintained the heresy of the

[1] Eccl. Hist. II. ix. § 110.

[2] Ibid. II. xix. §§ 143, 144.

Acephali, and taught that there was one operation and one will in the divine and human natures of Christ. Of these bishops, Pyrrhus, in the time of pope Theodore, came from Africa to Rome, and feigning, as afterwards appeared, repentance for his error, presented to that pope a paper, to which his name was subscribed, containing a condemnation of all the writings and acts, both of himself and his predecessors, against the catholic faith. On this account he was courteously received, and treated as a pontiff of the royal city; but when, on his return home, he relapsed into the error of his house, the aforesaid pope Theodore summoned an assembly of all the priests and clergy, at the church of St. Peter, the chief of the apostles, and condemned and anathematized him.

A.D. 643. Constantine, the son of Heraclius, reigned six months. Paul, the successor of Pyrrhus, not only adopted the insane doctrine of his predecessors, but openly persecuted the catholics, and punished by chains, exile, and scourging, those respondents of the holy Roman church who were sent to correct his error. And not only this, but, invading the venerable oratory in the house of Placidia, he overthrew the consecrated altar, and prevented them from celebrating masses in that place. On this account, he, like his predecessors, was justly condemned, and deposed by the apostolic see.

A.D. 671. Constantine, the son of Constantine, reigned twenty-eight years. This emperor, deceived by Paul, as his grandfather, Heraclius, had been by Sergius, bishop of the same royal city, published his "type" against the catholic church; laying down, as a confession of faith, that there were to be acknowledged neither one nor two wills, or operations, in Christ, as though the true faith was, that Christ has no will and no operation. On this account, pope Martin assembled at Rome a synod of 105 bishops, condemned Cyrus, Sergius, Pyrrhus, and Paul as heretics, and anathematized them; in consequence of which, Theodore, the exarch, being sent by the emperor, removed pope Martin from the church of Constantine, and brought him to Constantinople. Subsequently he was banished to, and ended his life at, Chersona, where numerous memorials of his virtues remain to this day, to illustrate his name. The date of this synod is the ninth year of the reign of Constantine, in the month of October, the eighth indiction. This Constantine, shortly after the elevation of Vitalian to the popedom, sent to the blessed Peter the apostle copies of the Gospels, written in golden letters, and ornamented round about with white gems of extraordinary size; and he himself in person, some years afterwards, (that is, during the sixth indiction,) went to Rome, and entering the church in a procession of the whole army, bearing wax candles, made an offering upon the altar of St. Peter of a pall interwoven with gold. In the following year there occurred an eclipse of the sun,[1] which is within the memory of men of our own age, about the tenth hour of the day, on the 5th of the nones of May [3d May]. Archbishop Theodore,[2] and abbot Boniface, both men of great learning, having been sent to Britain by Vitalian, stored very many of the churches of the Angles with the rich fruit of ecclesiastical doctrine. Con-

[1] Eccl. Hist. III. xxvii. § 240. [2] Ibid. IV. i. §§ 253, 254, &c.

stantine, after having pillaged the provinces to an extent without parallel, was assassinated in a bath, and died in the twelfth indiction; and, shortly afterwards, pope Vitalian was translated to the kingdom of heaven.

A.D. 688. Constantine, the son of the last Constantine, reigned seventeen years. In this reign, the Saracens invaded Sicily, and after a short time returned, with a vast amount of plunder, to Alexandria. Pope Agatho, at the request of Constantine, Heraclius, and Tiberius, all emperors of great piety, sent to the royal city his legates, among whom was John, then a deacon, but soon after bishop of the church of Rome, to restore unity to the holy churches of God. These were very courteously received by Constantine, a most reverent defender of the catholic faith, and were desired to intermit their philosophical disputations, and, in a pacificatory spirit, to confer, and institute a thorough inquiry into the true faith; and, for this purpose, as many of the works of the ancient fathers, in the library of Constantinople, as they required, were put at their disposal. At this conference there were present 150 bishops, with George, patriarch of the royal city, and Macarius, patriarch of Antioch, as presidents; and the result was, that the framers of the doctrine of one will and one principle of action, were convicted of having falsified the authority of the catholic fathers, in very many places. After this discussion, George was brought round to the true faith; but Macarius, with his followers, and, at the same time, with his predecessors, Cyrus, Sergius, Honorius, Pyrrhus, Paul, and Peter, was anathematized, and Theophanius, an abbot from Sicily, was made bishop of Antioch in his stead. So great, moreover, was the influence and success of these legates of catholic peace, that John, bishop of Portua, one of their number, on the Sunday of the octaves of Easter, celebrated a public mass in Latin, in the church of St. Sophia, before the emperor and patriarch. This council, which was held at Constantinople, and the decrees of which were written in Greek, in the time of pope Agatho, under the authority and in the presence of the most pious emperor Constantine, within his palace, and at the same time in the presence of the legates of the apostolic see, and of 150 bishops, was the sixth general council. For the first general council was that assembled at Nice, against Arius, in the time of pope Julius, under Constantine, and consisted of 318 prelates. The second was held at Constantinople, against Macedonius and Eudoxius, and consisted of 150 prelates, in the time of pope Damasus and of the emperor Gratian, and at the period when Nectarius was ordained bishop of that city. The third was held at Ephesus, against Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople, in the reign of Theodosius the Great, and in the pontificate of Celestin, and consisted of 200 prelates. The fourth was held at Chalcedon, under pope Leo, in the reign of Marcian, against Eutyches, the head of an impious body of monks, and consisted of 630 bishops. The fifth was held also at Constantinople, in the time of pope Vigilius, under the emperor Justinian, against Theodore and all heretics; and the sixth was that of which we have just now spoken.

Aedilthryda,[1] a Christian virgin, the daughter of Anna, king of the Angles, and the wife, first of all, of a distinguished noble, and afterwards of king Ecfrid, after having occupied the marital bed for twelve years with unsullied chastity, preserved her purity and virginity to the end, and, from a queen, assumed the veil and became a nun. Shortly afterwards, she obtained a place, called Ely, for the erection of a monastery, and became the mother and pious nurse of holy virgins. Her lifeless corpse bore witness to her merits; for it, with the garment in which it was wrapped, after being buried sixteen years, was discovered free from decay, and entire.

A.D. 698. Justinian, the younger son of Constantine, reigned ten years. This emperor made a peace of ten years by land and sea with the Saracens; and besides this, he reduced to the Roman sway Africa, a province which had been held by them, and in which they had taken and destroyed Carthage. By the command of this emperor, Zacharias, the protospataire, was sent to summon Sergius, of blessed memory, pontiff of the church of Rome, because he refused to recognise the erratic synod[2] which Justinian had assembled at Constantinople; but the soldiers of Ravenna and its neighbourhood prevented the execution of his impious command, and with contumely and insult drove Zacharias from Rome. This same pope Sergius ordained the venerable Uilbrord,[3] surnamed Clement, bishop of the Frisians, in whose country he at this present time wanders, a stranger in a foreign land, (for he is of the race of the Angles, in Britain,) in the hope of gaining an everlasting home in heaven; inflicting severe defeats upon the devil, and increasing the Christian faith. Justinian, deprived of his kingdom on account of his perfidy, retired into exile in Pontus.

A.D. 701. Leo reigned three years. Pope Sergius discovered, by a revelation from heaven, in the sacristy of the blessed Peter the apostle, a silver chest, which had for a very long time lain concealed in an obscure corner of that building; and within it, a cross, embellished with a variety of precious stones. The interior of this, on the removal of four metal plates, in which the precious stones were set, displayed to his sight a large piece of the saving cross of our Lord, which, ever since that time, in the basilica of our Saviour, called Constantiniana, is annually, on the day of the exaltation of the cross [14th Sept.], kissed and adored by all the people. The entire life of the very reverend Cuthberct, formerly an anchoret, but afterwards bishop of the church of Lindisfarne, in Britain, from infancy to old age, was distinguished by a continued series of miracles; and his body, after having been buried eleven years, was found, together with the garment in which it was wrapped, as entire and without decay as if he had died that very hour,—as I some years ago commemorated in my book on his life and virtues, lately written in prose and hexameter verse.

[1] Eccl. Hist. IV. xix. § 309.

[2] Namely, that which is usually called the Quini-Sext. Beda styles it erratic, because its authority was fluctuating and unsteady. See Basnage, Hist. de l'Eglise, p. 554.

[3] Eccl. Hist. V. x. xi.

A.D. 708. Tiberius reigned seven years. A synod convened at Aquileia had not confidence, by reason of its ignorance of the true faith, to act upon the resolutions of the fifth general council; but at length, instructed by the salutary admonitions of the blessed pope Sergius, it, in conjunction with the rest of the churches of Christ, assented to its decrees. Gisulphus, the leader of the Lombards at Beneventum, devastated Campania with fire and sword, and took many captives; but the apostolic pope John, the successor of Sergius, finding no possibility of resisting his violence, sent a body of priests to him with large donations, redeemed the whole of the captives, and caused the enemy to return home. To him succeeded another John, who, amongst many other illustrious works, built within the church of the blessed Peter the apostle an oratory, of admirable workmanship, to the holy mother of God. Hereberct, king of the Lombards, restored to the jurisdiction of the apostolic see the lands and patrimonies of the Cottian Alps, which had formerly belonged to that see, but which had been seized, and for a long time in the possession of the Lombards, and sent the deed containing this gift, written in letters of gold, to Rome.

A.D. 714. Justinian, a second time, in association with his son Tiberius, reigned six years. This emperor, by the aid of Terbellius, king of the Vulgari, recovered his throne, and put to death the patricians who had expelled him, Leo, who had usurped his seat, and his successor, Tiberius, who had kept the deposed monarch in prison, in the same city, during the whole of his reign. Callinicus, the patriarch, however, he deprived of sight, sent him to Rome, and conferred the bishopric upon Cyrus, the supporter of his exile, and who was an abbot in Pontus. This emperor invited pope Constantine to his court, received him with great honour, and having ordered him to perform mass on Sunday, and having received the communion at his hands, he sent him home. During this ceremony he prostrated himself upon the ground, and, requesting the pope's intercession for his sins, renewed all the privileges of the church. Afterwards having, contrary to the urgent expostulations of the apostolic pope, sent an army to Pontus to apprehend Philippicus, whom he had sent into banishment there, the soldiers went over to Philippicus, declared him emperor on the spot, and returning with him to Constantinople, gave battle to Justinian at the twelfth milestone from the city, defeated and put him to death, and conferred the throne upon Philippicus.

A.D. 716. Philippus, in a reign of one year and six months, ejected Cyrus from the pontificate, and commanded him to retire to Pontus, to govern his monastery in the capacity of abbot. This emperor, also, sent to pope Constantine letters replete with unsound doctrine, which the pope, acting on the advice of a council of the apostolic see, rejected, and, in consequence, caused to be put up in the portico of St. Peter tablets containing a representation of the acts of the six holy general councils; (for Philippicus had commanded the representations similar to these in the royal city to be removed;) and the Roman people made a resolution that the name of the heretical emperor should not be used in charters, nor

any statue erected to him; whence it happens that his image was not introduced into the church, nor his name pronounced in the solemnities of the masses.

A.D. 719. Anastasius reigned three years. This emperor took Philippicus captive, and deprived him of sight; but abstained from putting him to death. He also sent a letter to pope Constantine at Rome, by the hands of Scholasticus the patrician, and exarch of Italy, in which he declared himself favourable to the catholic faith, and the decrees of the holy sixth council. Liuthbrand, at the admonition of the venerable pope Gregory, confirmed the gift of the patrimony of the Cottian Alps, which Hereberct had made, and which he had ratified. Egberct,[1] a holy man of the nation of the Angles, adorned the priesthood by a monastic life; and wandering a stranger in foreign lands, that he might gain a home in heaven, by his pious preaching converted many provinces of the Scottish nation to the canonical observance of the time of Easter, from which they had long deviated, in the 716th year of the incarnation of our Lord.

A.D. 720. Theodosius reigned one year. He, on being elected to the empire, inflicted a signal defeat upon Anastasius at Nicæa, compelled him to take the oath of allegiance, to attach himself to the clerical order, and be ordained a presbyter. This emperor, too, having ascended the throne, and being a catholic, immediately proceeded to restore to its former place in the royal city that venerable representation which contained the decrees of the six holy councils, and which had been torn down by Philippicus. In this reign the river Tiber overflowed its banks, and caused serious damage to the city of Rome. In the Via Lata, the waters rose to the depth of one foot and a half, and flowing from the gate of St. Peter to the Milvian Bridge, united themselves in their own channel. The flood lasted seven days, until heaven answered the repeated litanies of the citizens, and it retired on the eighth day. At this time, many of the Angles, noble and simple, men and women, soldiers and private persons, moved by the instinct of divine love, were wont to repair from Britain to Rome. Among these, the very reverend abbot Ceolfrid, at the age of seventy-four years, after having been a presbyter forty-seven years, and an abbot thirty-five years, on his arrival at Langres, died, and was buried in the church of the two blessed martyrs. This holy man, among the other donations which he had provided to take to Rome, sent to the church of St. Peter the Pandect,[2] translated into Latin from the Hebrew and Greek by St. Jerome.

A.D. 729. Leo reigned nine years. In this reign the Saracens, with an immense army, penetrated to Constantinople, and for three years besieged the city. At length heaven answered the earnest

[1] Eccl. Hist. III. iv. § 161; V. xxii. § 445.

[2] The Pandect was the name for a volume containing the Old and New Testaments. See the verses written by Alcuin, and printed in his works, ii. 203, ed. 1777; and also in the Annals of Baronius, A.D. 778, § 27. Alcuin, in his treatise upon Orthography, when treating of this word says, "Therefore the Old and New Testament, if they be written together in one volume, it is called a Pandect." Opp. ii. 308.

prayers of the inhabitants ; vast numbers of the enemy perished by famine, cold, and pestilence, and the rest, wearied by their ineffectual efforts, raised the siege. In their retreat they assailed the Vulgari, in their territory upon the Danube, and being defeated by them, they took refuge in their ships. Nor were their perils then over, for when they had put out to sea, a sudden tempest overtook them, many of them were drowned, or shipwrecked on the shore, and there put to death. On the report being brought to Liuthbrand that the Saracens, after invading Sardinia, had not shrunk from defiling the place to which the bones of the holy bishop Augustine, to avoid the devastations of the barbarians, had formerly been translated, and where they had been honourably buried, he purchased them for a large sum of money, brought them over to Ticinæ, and there reburied them with the honour due to so great a prelate.

### THE REMAINDER OF THE SIXTH AGE.

These particulars concerning the course of events in time past, I have taken the trouble to digest, as far as possible, in accordance with the Hebrew Scriptures; deeming it proper, that, as the Greeks drew up for themselves and their fellow-countrymen chronological works in accordance with the version of the LXX, which they habitually used, so also we, who, by the labours of the blessed translator Jerome, drink at the pure source of the Hebrew Scriptures, should, in accordance with those Scriptures, determine the scheme of our calculation of time. But if any condemn this our labour as superfluous, let them, whosoever they be, receive without offence the fair reply which Jerome gives to those who affect to discredit the ancient cosmography : "If it is distaseful, let them not read it." Further, whether, in marking the course of events and their dates, the basis which is adopted be the Hebrew Scriptures, which even the Jews, our opponents, confess to have been transmitted to us in their purity, by the above-mentioned translator ; or whether it be the version of the LXX, which many affirm to have been originally published without sufficient care, or think, with St. Augustine, that it was subsequently corrupted by the Gentiles ; or whether it be a combination of the two, according to the respective opinion of each person, and whether to time past he assigns, or finds assigned, a longer or a shorter period ; still we urge upon all, without distinction, not to be thereby influenced in forming an estimate of the length or shortness of the remaining periods of time, but to be ever mindful of our Lord's saying, "Of the last day and hour no one knoweth, not even the angels of heaven, but the Father alone." [Matt. xxiv. 36.] And, on this head, I would add a particular caution against those who suggest, that the limits of the duration of the world have been, from the first, limited to the space of 6000 years, and who, to save themselves from the imputation of contradicting the saying of our Lord, add, that it is uncertain in what year of the sixth millenary the day of judgment is to come, but that it may be confidently expected about the end of that period. For if one does but ask them what are

the grounds of this belief, they reply in a tone of indignant surprise, "Surely you have read in Genesis, that in six days God made the world; and, on these grounds, there is a reasonable belief that it will endure 6000 years, more or less!" And, worse than this, an opinion, derived from the seventh day on which God rested from his work, has arisen, that after 6000 years of the labours of the saints, they, in this very life, will rise again immortal, and reign in joy and felicity with Christ.

But, once for all, rejecting these conclusions as heretical and frivolous, be it ours to hold with sincerity the catholic belief, that those six days in which God made the world, and the seventh day on which He rested from his work, and which on that account He sanctified and blessed as a day of rest for ever, do not signify 6000 years of a world of labour, and a seventh millenary of the reign of the blessed on earth with Christ, but rather six ages of the world in its progress to its close, in which the saints labour in this life for Christ's sake, and a seventh of everlasting rest in another life, which their spirits, separated from the body, enjoy with them. With regard to which the true belief is, that this sabbath of spirits had its commencement at the time when the first martyr of Christ, suffering death at the hands of his brother, was translated in the spirit into eternal rest, and that it will find its completion on the day of the resurrection, when the spirits also shall have received incorruptible bodies. And, in like manner, as no one of the five past ages appears to have contained exactly 1000 years, but some more, and some less, and no two to have corresponded in length, so, also, the duration of the present age must be unknown to mortals, and known only to Him who has enjoined his servants to watch with their loins girded about and their lights burning, like unto men that wait for their Lord when He shall return from the wedding.

THE END.

# THE EPISTLE

OF THE

# VENERABLE BEDA TO BISHOP ECGBERCT.

*To the most beloved and most reverend bishop Ecgberct, Beda, the servant of Christ, greeting:*—I have not forgotten the wish that you expressed last year, during the sojourn of a few days, which the purposes of study induced me to make in your monastery, that you should take advantage of our meeting again this year in the same place for the same common purpose, to invite me to a conversation with you; and, if the will of heaven had permitted the consummation of this wish, this letter would have been rendered unnecessary by the greater fulness with which the freedom of a personal interview would have enabled us to discuss the subjects upon which I might desire or deem it requisite to offer my suggestions. But although, as you are aware, the weak state of my health has prevented this, yet the fraternal regard with which your affection inspires me, has prompted me to do all that lies in my power by sending, in a letter, the communication which I am unable to make in a personal visit; and I most earnestly beg of you to banish from your mind any idea that this epistle is dictated by any arrogant affectation of superiority, and to think that it flows from a real and unassuming spirit of humility and affection.

§ 2. I exhort your holiness, therefore, most well beloved in Christ, to be mindful by the sanctity both of your works and doctrine, to confirm that sacred dignity which the Author of dignities and Giver of spiritual gifts has vouchsafed to bestow upon you. For neither of these virtues can be fully complete without the other, when either a good-living bishop is neglectful of his office as a teacher, or, when one who is correct as a teacher lightly regards the exercise of good works. But such a servant as truly performs both of these duties verily awaits the arrival of his Lord with joy, hoping to hear the words, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' [Matt. xxv. 23.] On the other hand, if any one (which God forbid) after accepting the office of bishop neglects to correct his own evil deeds by a holy life, or those of the people placed under his charge by punishment or admonition, there shall happen to him, at the coming of the Lord in an hour when he thinketh not, that which is plainly declared by the sentence passed on the unprofitable servant—'Cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' [Matt. xxv. 30.]

§ 3. Above all things, holy father, I earnestly pray you to restrain yourself, with the dignity which befits a bishop, from idle speaking and detraction, and the other infectious disorders of an unbridled tongue; but to keep both your lips and mind occupied in divine discourses, and on the careful perusal of the Scriptures, and particularly in reading the epistles of the blessed Paul the apostle to Timothy and Titus, and also the careful and full dissertations upon the life and vices of rulers, which the most holy pope Gregory has written in his book on Pastoral Rule,[1] and in his homilies on the Gospel, that so your speech may be seasoned with the salt of wisdom, elevated far above common speech, and more worthy to shed light on divine teaching. For as it is disgraceful if the consecrated vessels of the altar be ever profaned to vile and common purposes, so is it in every way a wretched perversion that he, who has been ordained to consecrate the sacraments of the Lord upon the altar, should at one time as the Lord's servant assist in celebrating these mysteries, and then immediately on his departure from the church, with that very mouth, and those self-same hands with which a little before he had handled sacred things, should to the indignation of the Lord begin to speak or act frivolously.

§ 4. But in addition to the reading of holy books, the intercourse of faithful and devout servants of Christ is of very great service in preserving the deeds or the tongue from impurity: that if at any time either the tongue begin to wax wanton, or the principle of evil deeds secretly to creep in, one may presently be supported and prevented from falling, by the hands of faithful associates. But if it be very expedient for all the servants of God thus to make provision for their security, how much more for those who are obliged by their office to be careful, not only for their own safety, but also for that of the church committed to their charge, according to him who said—'Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?' [2 Cor. xi. 28, 29.] Nor do I mention this, as though I were aware that you acted otherwise, but because it is commonly[2] reported of certain bishops that their service of Christ is of such a nature, that so far from associating with men of any religion or continence, they seek those who are given up to laughter, jestings, fables, revellings, and drunkenness, and the other allurements of a loose life, and who daily feed their belly with feasts more than their mind with heavenly sacrifices. Now if you find any of this character, I would have you correct them with your holy authority, and

[1] More generally called the Liber Pastoralis, Opp. i. 1049, ed. 1675. Several councils recommend this treatise to the careful study of the clergy. Thus, for instance, the third council of Tours (can. iii.) decrees, that "if it be possible, let none be unacquainted with the canons, or the Liber Pastoralis of the blessed pope Gregory, in which every one ought to study himself as it were in a mirror." (Labb. Concil. vii. 1261.) See also, to the same effect, the second council of Chalons, can. i. (Id. col. 1272,) and the second council of Aix-la-Chapelle (A.D. 836, cap ii. can. 4, Id. col. 1707.)

[2] It would be easy to illustrate this passage by numerous quotations from the proceedings of councils and the ecclesiastical laws of the Anglo-Saxons, by which it appears that the Anglo-Saxon clergy had fallen into many excesses.

admonish them to select such witnesses of their conversation, both by day and night, as, by works worthy of God and exhortations agreeing thereto, may be able both to benefit the people and assist the bishops themselves in their spiritual duties. For, read the Acts of the Apostles and you will see, from the narrative of the blessed Luke, what was the character of the companions of Paul and Barnabas, and what was the work in which they themselves were engaged wherever they came. For immediately they entered into cities or synagogues they set themselves diligently to preach and disseminate everywhere the word of God. And this too, my well-beloved, is the duty I would desire you to discharge; for the very object of your consecration and election by the Lord was to preach the Word with great power, by the aid of Him, the very King of power, our Lord Jesus Christ. Nor will you fail in this, if, into whatsoever place you come, you gather together the inhabitants and offer them the word of exhortation, presenting at the same time by your mode of living, with those who accompany you, such an example as becometh a leader in a heavenly warfare.

§ 5. And because the extent of country over which the diocese committed to your government extends precludes the possibility of your personally visiting the whole of it, and preaching the word of God in every village and farmstead even within the course of a whole year, it is very necessary that you should associate to yourself a greater number of assistants in the holy work, by ordaining presbyters and appointing teachers who may apply themselves in every village to preaching the word of God and consecrating the heavenly mysteries, and above all to performing the office of holy baptism when opportunity occurs. And with regard to this preaching to the people, I am of opinion that above all things the utmost diligence and care should be used that the catholic faith, as it is contained in the Creed of the apostles and the Lord's Prayer, which the scriptures of the holy gospel teach us, should be rootedly fixed in the memories of all those who are subject to your rule. And, indeed, there can be no doubt that these have been perfectly learnt by all who, from constant study, have acquired the Latin language; but cause them also to be said and continually repeated by unlearned persons, that is, by those who are acquainted with no other than their own tongue. And not only ought this course to be pursued with the laity, I mean those who are still engaged in secular pursuits, but also with those clergy or monks who are unlearned in the Latin tongue. For by this means the whole body of the faithful will learn upon what grounds they believe, and that steadfastness of creed by which they ought to fortify and arm themselves in their conflicts with unclean spirits; so that the whole band of those who make their supplications unto the Lord may know what requests are the most fitting to be asked of the divine mercy. On this account I myself have frequently given unlearned priests an English translation of both the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. For the holy bishop Ambrose[1] also, speaking con-

[1] Symbolum quoque specialiter debemus, tanquam nostri signaculum cordis, antelucanis horis quotidie recensere. De Virginibus, lib. iii. ed. Bened. tom. ii.

cerning the faith, admonishes that the words of the Creed should be repeated every morning by all the faithful, and that they should fortify themselves with this, as with a spiritual antidote, against the poison which, day and night, the devil with cunning malignity is placing before them. But with regard to ourselves, in addition to these considerations, more frequent repetition of the Lord's Prayer has been taught us by our custom of constant prayer and frequent bending of the knees.

§ 6. But if in your pastoral office you carry into effect these suggestions by ruling and feeding the sheep, it is impossible to tell the greatness of the reward prepared for you with the Shepherd of shepherds. For, in proportion to the rarity of examples of this most holy work among the bishops of our nation, the more exalted will be the rewards of singular merit which you will receive, as being one who are inflamed with fatherly affection and anxiety to provoke the people of God, by means of a frequent repetition of the Creed and Lord's Prayer, to the knowledge, love, faith, hope, and searching after those heavenly gifts which are there repeated. As, on the other hand, if you negligently discharge the business committed you by the Lord, in punishment for the keeping back of the talent, you shall receive hereafter your portion with the wicked and slothful servant; and especially will this be the case, if you have the presumption to require and receive temporal benefits from those to whom you have not thought fit to repay any of the gifts of the heavenly bounty. For when the Lord, sending out his disciples to preach the gospel, said, 'And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand;' He a little after added, 'Freely ye have received, freely give: provide neither gold, nor silver.' [Matt. x. 7—9.] If, then, He ordered them to preach the gospel freely, and forbade them to take either gold or silver, or any temporal profit from those to whom they preached, what, I ask, must be the imminent peril of those who pursue a contrary course?

§ 7. Consider what grievous wickedness they commit, who most carefully require their earthly gains from their hearers, yet for their eternal salvation care to expend no labour at all in preaching, or exhortation, or reproof. O well-beloved bishop, I pray you anxiously to weigh this. For we have heard, and it is the common report, that there are many vills and villages of our nation situated in accessible mountains and bushy defiles, which for many years have never been visited by a bishop, to administer and preach the comforts of heavenly grace, and yet that not even one of these can be exempt from paying him tribute. And not only are such places without a bishop to confirm the baptized by the imposition of his hands, but without any teacher whatever to instruct them in the true faith, or in the difference between a good and evil action. And thus it comes to pass that some of the bishops not only do not preach the gospel, or lay hands upon the faithful freely, but they are also guilty of the graver crime of taking money from their hearers, a thing which God has forbidden, and lightly regarding the work of the Word, which God has commanded them to exercise. Let us read how very differently acted Samuel the high priest,

beloved of God, all the people being witnesses. "I have walked before you," says he, "from my childhood unto this day. Behold, here I am; witness against me before the Lord, and before his Anointed; whose ox have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? of whose hands have I received any bribe? and I will repent to-day, and make restitution to you. And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken aught of any man's hand." [1 Sam. xii. 3.] And such was the merit of his innocence and justice, that he was thought deserving to be reckoned among the leaders and priests of the people of God, and came forth worthy to be heard by God in his prayers, and of converse with heaven, as says the writer of the Psalm:—"Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name: they called upon the Lord, and He heard them. He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar." [Ps. xcvi. 6.]

§ 8. Now, if we believe and profess that any advantage is conferred on the faithful by the imposition of hands, through which the Holy Spirit is received, then it is plain that they who are deprived of the imposition of hands are deprived also of this advantage. And to whom is the fault of this privation to be ascribed, more than to those very bishops, who profess that they are the prelates of those for whom they either neglect, or are unable, to perform the duties of the prelacy? Nor is there any greater cause of this crime than avarice, arguing in condemnation of which the apostle, in whom Christ spake, said, "The love of money is the root of all evil." [2 Tim. vi. 10.] And again, "The covetous shall not inherit the kingdom of God." [1 Cor. vi. 10.] For when a bishop, stimulated by the love of money, has taken upon himself the prelacy over a greater number of people than he can possibly, within the course of a year, preach to, or visit, it is plain that he incurs a peril, fatal both to himself and to those over whom he presides, with the title indeed, but with none of the functions, of a bishop.

§ 9. Having made these brief remarks to your holiness, O well-beloved bishop, on the grievances under which our nation labours, I earnestly beseech you to strive, to the utmost of your ability, to reduce to the rule of good living, whatever evil actions may fall under your notice. And you have, I believe, a most ready coadjutor in so just a task in the person of king Ceoluulf,[1] who has such an engrafted love of religion, that he will eagerly endeavour to lend his aid in whatever appertains to the rule of piety; and since he is moreover bound to you by the ties of relationship and affection, he will most readily carry into action those good works which you set on foot. Wherefore I pray you diligently to admonish him to effect in your time a reformation, by means of which the ecclesiastical affairs of our nation may be placed in a better position than hitherto. Nor do I see any other possible method of doing this, than by consecrating a greater number of bishops for our nation, according

[1] This is he to whom Beda dedicated his Ecclesiastical History, and who afterwards became a monk at Lindisfarne. He and Ecgberct were first-cousins, Cuthwin, the father of Ceolwulf, and Eata the father of Ecgberct, being the sons of Leodwald.

to the example of the giver of the law, who being unable, by himself alone, to bear the burden and litigation of the people of Israel, was aided by divine counsel to choose out and consecrate seventy elders, whose assistance and advice might render the weight imposed on him less oppressive. For who does not see how much better it is for so enormous a weight of ecclesiastical government to be divided among a greater number, who will thus bear it more easily, than for one to be overwhelmed by a burden which he is unable to carry? For the holy pope Gregory[1] also, in a letter which he sent to the most blessed archbishop Augustin (in which he treats respecting the preservation of the faith, while it was not yet received among us), decrees that so soon as it was embraced, twelve bishops ought to be ordained, among whom the bishop of York was to be metropolitan, receiving his pall from the apostolic see. And I trust that the fatherly care of your holiness, assisted by the patronage of the above-named most pious and God-beloved king, will carefully endeavour to complete this number of bishops; in order that by an augmentation in the number of its magistrates, more perfect regulations may be made in the church of Christ, with regard to the due performance of the worship of our holy religion. And, indeed, we know that by means of the negligence and foolish donations of former kings, it is no easy matter to find a vacant place for the foundation of an episcopal see.

§ 10. Wherefore I should deem it expedient to hold a greater council, with the concurrence both of the archbishop and the king, in order that some place belonging to one of the monasteries may be provided by an edict for the foundation of an episcopal see. And lest, perchance, the abbot and monks should endeavour to oppose and resist this decree, let permission be given them to select one of their own body to be ordained bishop, and have the episcopal cure of the places adjacent which are attached to the said monastery, together with that of the monastery itself: but if it should happen that there cannot be found in the monastery a fit person to be ordained bishop, yet, in accordance with the canonical decrees, let the decision rest with them of a person from their own diocese. And if, with the aid of the Lord, you carry out these suggestions, there will be no difficulty, I think, in obtaining a metropolitan bishop for the church of York, in accordance with the decrees of the apostolic see. And if it should seem necessary, in order to maintain this bishopric, that such a monastery should receive an augmentation, both in the extent of its territory and its possessions, there are numberless places, as we know, which have the name of monasteries ascribed to them, but yet have nothing of the monastic mode of life. Of these I trust that some may be transferred, by the authority of the synod, from the purposes of luxury to those of chastity, from vanity to temperance, from excess and gluttony to continence and piety of heart, and so be employed for the aid of the episcopal see which is to be founded.

§ 11. Now, places of this description are very extensive and numerous; and they are commonly said to be serviceable neither

[1] Eccl. Hist. I. xxix. § 73.

to God nor men, because neither is a regular life according to God kept up in them, nor are they occupied by knights or earls of the secular powers to defend our nation from barbarians. If, therefore, any one, in order to meet the necessities of the times, shall found in them an episcopal see, so far from incurring the blame of violation of duty, he will rather be performing a virtuous action. For how can it be accounted as a sin, if the unjust judgments of some rulers be corrected by the just decisions of better rulers; and the lying writings of wicked scribes be obliterated and nullified by the discreet sentence of wise priests? according to the example of sacred history, which, describing the times of the kings of Judah, from David and Solomon to the last king Zedekiah, declares that some of them indeed were religious, but the majority were reprobates, and that alternately the wicked rejected the deeds of the good who had preceded them; and, on the other hand, as was right, the just, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, by means of the holy prophets and priests, zealously reformed the baneful deeds of their impious predecessors, according to the commands of the blessed Isaiah, who said, "Loose the bands of wickedness, let the broken go free, and break every yoke." [Isai. lviii. 6, Vulg.]

Following this example, your holiness also, with the aid of the religious king of our nation, may becomingly destroy the irreligious and unjust deeds and charters of former rulers, and make such provisions as may be advantageous for our province, whether as regards God or the world: lest, by the cessation of religion in our times, the love and fear of an inspector from within may be lost; or, by a diminution in the numbers of our secular armies, our territories be left undefended against the assaults of barbarians. For, though it is a disgraceful thing to say, yet as you yourselves very well know, those who are utterly regardless of a monastic life, have got into their power so many places under the name of monasteries, that there is no place at all which the sons of the nobility or of veteran soldiers may occupy; and accordingly, when they have arrived at years of puberty, they live in idleness, and unmarried, without any purpose of continence; and on this account either quit their native land, for which they are bound to fight; or, with greater wickedness and shamelessness, those who have made no resolutions of chastity surrender themselves up to luxury and fornication, and do not even abstain from the virgins consecrated to God.

§ 12. But there are others guilty of a still more grievous offence. For though they are themselves laics, and neither habituated to, nor actuated by, the love of any regular life, yet by pecuniary payments to the kings, and under the pretext of founding monasteries, they purchase for themselves territories in which they may have freer scope for their lust; and moreover they cause these to be assigned to them by regal edicts for an hereditary possession, and they get the charters[1] of their privileges confirmed by the subscriptions of bishops, abbots,

[1] Kemble remarks that this passage shows that, at the end of the seventh and commencement of the eighth centuries, lands were conveyed by charter in England, and that it was no new arrangement, since Beda means his words to apply to the whole period of time between the introduction of Christianity and his own day. Introduction to the Saxon Charters, I. vii.

and the secular powers, as though they were truly worthy of God. And thus having got into their own possession fields or villages, they henceforth are exempt both from the service of God and man, being obedient only to their own desires; and though they themselves are laymen, yet they have monks under their rule. Or rather, they are not monks whom they assemble there, but such as having been expelled from the true monasteries for the crime of disobedience, are found wandering up and down; or those whom they themselves have succeeded in alluring from these monasteries; or at any rate those among their own servants whom they have been able to induce to take the tonsure, and make a promise of monastic obedience to them. With these motley bands they fill the cells which they have constructed; and there is presented this disgraceful and unheard-of spectacle—the self-same men at one time engaged in conjugal duties and the procreation of children, and at another rising from their beds, and diligently performing the internal duties of the monasteries. Moreover, with equal shamelessness they seek places, as they say, for founding monasteries for their wives,[1] who with like folly, being lay-women, suffer themselves to be the rulers of the handmaidens of Christ. To whom aptly applies that common proverb,—"Though the wasps may indeed build cells, yet they do not treasure up in them honey, but poison."

§ 13. Thus, for about thirty years, that is, from the time when king Aldfrid was removed from the world, our province has been so demented by this[2] mad error, that from that period scarcely has there been a single prefect, who has not, during the course of his prefectship, founded for himself a monastery of this description, and at the same time bound his wife in the guiltiness of a like injurious traffic. And since this most wretched custom has become prevalent, the ministers also and servants of the king were content to do the same. And thus, contrary to the established order, numberless persons are found who style themselves, indiscriminately, abbots, and prefects, or ministers or servants of the king: and though laymen might have been instructed in something of the monastic life, not indeed by experience, but by hearsay, yet these persons have nothing in common with the character or profession whose duty it is to give the instruction.

And, indeed, such persons at their own caprice suddenly receive, as you are aware, the tonsure; and by their own decision are made from laymen, not monks, but abbots. But since they are found to have no knowledge of the aforesaid virtue, acquired either by practice or study, what can be more applicable to them than that curse which is written in the gospel, "If the blind lead the blind, do not both fall into the ditch?" [Matt. xv. 14.] But might not this blindness be restrained, at some time or other, within bounds, by regular discipline, and expelled afar off from the boundaries of holy church by the authority of the bishop and synod, if the bishops

[1] How completely this was opposed to the first principles of monachism, may appear by referring to Mabillon's preface to his Acta SS. ord. S. Bened. i. § 112; ii. § 84.

[2] This passage is commentated on by Thomassin, de Beneficiis, ii. 589, ed. Lugd. 1705.

themselves did not think fit to aid and countenance wickedness of this kind? For so far are they from being zealous to counteract unjust decrees of this character by just ones, that, as I have before mentioned, they are content rather to confirm them by their own subscriptions; being themselves stimulated to the confirmation of these evil charters, by the same covetousness which prompted the purchasers of them to found monasteries of this description. Many other intimations might I give you in this letter, with regard to these and such like traitors from the truth, by whom our province is harassed, did I not know that you yourself were fully cognisant of these matters. Nor have I stated these facts with any idea of teaching you that of which you were previously ignorant, but with a view of admonishing you, by a friendly exhortation, zealously and to the utmost of your ability to correct those errors, with the existence of which you are well acquainted.

§ 14. And again and again I earnestly pray and beseech you in the Lord, to protect the flock committed to your charge from the violence of invading wolves; and to remember that you are ordained to be, not a hireling, but a shepherd, proving your love for the great Shepherd by the careful feeding of his sheep, and by being prepared, if occasion so demand, to lay down your life for them with the blessed chief of the apostles. I pray you anxiously to beware, lest, when the same chief of the apostles, and the other leaders of faithful flocks, offer to Christ, in the day of judgment, the plenteous fruits of their pastoral care, some part of your sheep may justly deserve to be set apart among the goats at the left hand of the Judge, and depart with the curse into everlasting punishment;—nay, rather, may you yourself merit to be enrolled in the number of those of whom Isaiah says, "A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation." [Isai. lx. 22.] For it is your duty most diligently to inspect what good, or what evil, is carried on in every monastery of your diocese, lest either an abbot, ignorant, or a contemner, of its rules, or an unworthy abbess, be set over the servants or the handmaidens of Christ; or, on the other hand, that no undisciplined crowd of contumacious hearers despise the oversight of their spiritual rulers. And most particularly do I urge this upon you, because it is commonly reported, that you are wont to say, that the inquisition and examination of the internal affairs of every monastery devolves, not upon the kings, or any other secular rulers, but on you bishops only; unless, perchance, any one in the monastery be proved to have offended against the secular rulers themselves. It is your duty, I say, to take care that in places consecrated to God, the devil may not usurp to himself the rule; that instead of peace, discord; instead of piety, strife; instead of sobriety, drunkenness; instead of charity and chastity, fornication and homicides, may not claim for themselves a dwelling; that there may not be found among you any of whom this complaint may deservedly be made—"I saw the wicked buried, who in their lifetime were in the place of the holy, and were praised in the city as though for just works." [Eccles. viii. 10.]

§ 15. It is needful, also, that you give earnest heed to those

who are still living a secular life, remembering, as I premonished you at the commencement of this letter, to provide for them sufficient teachers in the life of salvation, and causing them to learn this among other things, namely, what works are pleasing to the Lord—what sins must be abstained from by those who desire to please Him—with what sincerity they must believe in Him—with what devotional exercises they must supplicate the divine clemency —how frequently they must fortify themselves, and all that belongs to them, with the sign of the cross of our Lord against the assaults of unclean spirits—how salutary for every class of Christians is the daily[1] participation of the Lord's Body and Blood, according to the custom[2] which you know is closely observed by the church of Christ throughout Italy, Gaul, Africa, Greece, and the whole of the East. For this kind of religion and devout sanctification to the Lord, is, by the negligence of their teachers, banished as far away from nearly the whole of the laity of our province, as though it were almost a stranger; and those who appear to be among the more religious, do not presume to communicate in the holy mysteries,[3] except on the day of the Nativity of our Lord, on the Epiphany, and Easter-day, though there are numberless, innocent and chastely-living boys and girls, young men and young women, old men and old women, who, without any scruple of controversy, might partake of these heavenly mysteries every Lord's day, and also on the birthdays of the holy apostles and martyrs, as you yourself have seen done in the holy and apostolic church of Rome.[4] And even the married, if any one were to teach them the due measure of continence, and the virtue of chastity, might lawfully be able and gladly be willing to do the same.

§ 16. I have noted down these brief remarks, most holy bishop, both out of regard for your affection and for the sake of the public good, greatly desiring, and greatly exhorting you to strive, to free our nation from its old errors, and to bring it back to a safer and more direct path of life. And, if there be any—of whatsoever grade or order—who endeavour to thwart or impede your praiseworthy efforts, yet do you, mindful of the heavenly recompense, hold fast your holy and virtuous purpose firm unto the end. For I know that there are some who will vehemently oppose this our exhortation, and, chiefly, such as are conscious that they are entangled in the meshes of those very crimes from which we are restraining you. But remember the answer of the apostles, "We ought to obey God rather than men." [Acts v. 29.] For it

[1] It was the custom of the Anglo-Saxon church, at this time, daily to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Thus Beda, in his Commentary upon St. Matthew (Opp. v. 24, ed. Basil.):—"Panis quotidianus ... dictus est ... pro sacramento Corporis Christi quod quotidie accipimus."

[2] The usage of the primitive church upon this subject is examined by Bingham (XV. ix. § 4) with his usual research, and the result of his investigation supports the accuracy of the statement here made by Beda.

[3] On this communion thrice only in the year, see Bingham, as above, § 5.

[4] This statement is supported by the authority of St. Jerome, who writes (Epist. l. contra Jovinianum, ad Pammach. cap. vi.):—"Scio Romæ hanc esse consuetudinem, ut fideles semper Christi Corpus accipiant; quod nec reprehendo nec probo, unusquisque enim in suo sensu abundet."

is a command of God, "Sell that ye have, and give alms. And, unless any one shall give up all that he has, he cannot be my disciple." [St. Luke xii. 33.] But it is a modern tradition among some who profess themselves the servants of God, not only not to sell that which they have, but to obtain that which they have not. But how dare any one have the audacity to attach himself to the service of God, while either he retains what he had during his secular life, or, under the pretext of a more holy life, heaps up riches which before he had not, and in the face, too, of that well-known apostolic censure under which Ananias and Sapphira were not allowed to expiate this crime by any penance or satisfaction, but, with speedy vengeance, were condemned to instant death? And, indeed, they did not wish to acquire the possessions of others, but improperly to retain their own. Whence it is manifest how very far from the acquisition of money was the intention of the apostles, who truly served God under this rule, "Blessed are ye poor, for your's is the kingdom of heaven," [Matt. v. 3;] and, on the other hand, they were instructed by an example of an opposite tendency, "Woe unto you that are rich, for you have received your consolation." [Luke vi. 24.] Or, perchance, we think that the apostle was in error and wrote a falsehood, when, by way of admonition, he said, "Brethren, be not deceived," and immediately subjoined, "Neither the covetous, nor drunkards, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." [1 Cor. vi. 10.] And again, "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, nor extortioner, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." [Eph. v. 5.] When, therefore, the apostle clearly names covetousness and extortion to be idolatry, in what way can they be supposed to have erred, who have either withheld their hand from subscribing to this covetous traffic, even though the king commanded it, or who have presented themselves that they might cancel these useless charters and subscriptions?

§ 17. And truly astonishing is the rash folly, or rather the deplorable blindness, of those, who, though without any regard to the fear of heaven, everywhere think it right to rescind and nullify those things which the apostles and prophets have written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; yet, on the other hand, fear to erase and amend that which has been written by themselves, or by men like them, at the prompting of covetousness and luxury, as though this latter were sanctioned and confirmed by God. And, if I am not deceived, they in this respect resemble those heathens, who, despising the worship of God, venerate, fear, worship, adore, and supplicate those deities which are the creation and fancy of their own hearts, being most worthy of that rebuke which our Lord administered to the Pharisees when they preferred their own traditions to the law of God. "Why do ye also transgress the law of God by your tradition?" [Matt. xv. 3.] And, even if they produce charters drawn up in defence of their lusts, and confirmed by the subscription of noble persons, yet I pray you never to forget that decree pronounced by our Lord, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." [Matt. xv. 13.]

And, verily, I would learn of you, most holy bishop, since the Lord protests and says, "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it," [Matt. vii. 13,] what confidence can you have in the eternal salvation of those persons, who, during the whole time of their life, are known to walk through the wide gate and the broad way, and who do not, even in the smallest matters, put any restraint upon their pleasures, either of body or mind, for the sake of a heavenly reward; unless, perchance, we are to believe the possibility of their being absolved from their crimes by the alms which, in the midst of their daily lusts and pleasures, they were seen to give to the poor,—though the very hand and conscience that offers a gift to God, ought to be purified and absolved from sin,—or unless we are to believe that they, who, during their lifetime, were themselves unworthy, may, now that they are dead, be redeemed by others, through the mysteries of a holy oblation. Or, perchance, the fault of concupiscence seems to them a light one. I will discuss this point a little more fully. This caused Balaam, a man filled with the spirit of prophecy, to be banished from the lot of the saints. This polluted and destroyed Achan, through his participation in the accursed thing. This deprived Saul of his kingly crown. This made Gehazi lose the merit of prophecy, and defiled him and his seed with the pest of perpetual leprosy. This rendered Ananias and Sapphira, of whom I have before spoken, unworthy of the society of the monks, and inflicted upon them the punishment of death; and, to go to higher things, this cast down the angels from heaven, and expelled the first created from a paradise of perpetual bliss. And, if you will know, this is that triple-headed dog of the infernal regions, to whom fables have given the name, Cerberus, and whose rabid teeth, John, the apostle, warns us to avoid, when he says, "Dearly beloved, love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the world." [1 John ii. 15.] These brief remarks have I written against the poison of covetousness; and, for the rest, if we were to treat in the same manner of drunkenness, revelling, luxury, and other pests of this sort, this letter would have to be extended to an immense length.

O bishop, well-beloved in Christ, may the grace of the chief Shepherd ever preserve you in safety, for the wholesome feeding of his sheep. Amen.

END OF VOL. I.

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